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SIR HERBERT SAMUEL'S speech killed two very pretentious birds with one stone. It smashed up the case for tariffs as put forward by Mr. Chamberlain and at the same time it effectively exposed the farcical pretence of national unity. No wonder the Conservative members who had expected only a gentlemanly disclaimer were annoyed at this fierce onslaught by the Home Secretary upon the Chancellor of the Exchequer: no wonder that the subsequent debate on the collective irresponsibility of the Cabinet was treated in the spirit of *Alice in Wonderland*. Mr. Baldwin talked nicely about seventeenth and eighteenth century precedents, and Mr. Jack Jones retorted that he was interested not in King Charles but in King Mac! Mr. Lansbury produced some effective quotations from leading constitutional authorities. The best was from Todd's *Parliamentary Government*, which lays it down that "it is not allowable for a Cabinet Minister to oppose the measures of government, to shrink from an unqualified responsibility in respect of the same. . . . A Minister who infringes any one of these rules is bound to tender his immediate resignation."

But no one was really interested in constitutional theory. The effective attack on the Government came from Lord Winterton, who declared that for sound practical reasons the plan of government by a divided Cabinet was "utterly unworkable." "The whole show," he said, "will bust up." If Mr. Chamberlain could quote his father's prophecy about tariffs, Lord Winterton could quote from the same illustrious source the dictum that in politics especially it is a mistake to think that anyone is "indispensable." Lord Winterton thought that all non-Protectionists were quite dispensable in a Protectionist Government and, following a much-used business analogy, argued that if a Board of Directors permitted a minority of its members "to attack the policy of its Board and express the hope that at the earliest possible opportunity it would be reversed," then "the shares would go down, and the directors would very soon go out." His argument was immediately rubbed in by the spectacular falls of 21,000 and 12,000 Conservative votes in the by-elections at Croydon and the New Forest. No doubt this fall is mainly due to electoral apathy (the Labour votes dropped slightly also), but one obvious moral is that though the Liberals (if we include the Simonites) exactly cancelled themselves out in Parliament, there are still many anti-tariff votes unrepresented in the country.

This situation must continue until the Opposition has put its alternative economic policy into effective political terms, and Sir Stafford Cripps laid the foundations when he argued that the real question, apparent in Mr. Runciman's defence, was whether we were aiming at an early return to the gold standard, whether we were about to try once again to make the world safe for the rentier. In the same way the most useful part of Sir Herbert Samuel's speech was his insistence that tariffs were really an effort to shift the burden from the rich to the poor. If the Government's plans included a real plan for the reconstruction of each protected industry, the case would be very different. As it is, what answer can be given to any body of wage-earners who demand an increase of wages in return for the taxes on their food? England is entering upon the familiar miseries of protectionist politics where every interest hopes to get its slice of a cake the dimensions of which no one knows. The National Government so far offers us no national plan, but the familiar vista of intrigue and bickering which occurs in every "scientifically" protected country. England has joined in the international struggle to dry up the world's trade as fast as possible.

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All the Great Powers have now put their proposals on the table at Geneva. Three of them, Great Britain, the United States and Italy, are in substantial agreement on several important points, including the abolition of submarines and heavy guns. Italy goes farther in wanting the abolition also of tanks, of battleships and battle cruisers, of naval aircraft carriers and of bombing aeroplanes. The U.S.A. would put restrictions on tanks, Great Britain and Japan favour a reduction in the size of capital ships. Japan also proposes the abolition of aerial bombardment. Great Britain stands alone in demanding what, of course, has not a ghost of a chance of being carried—the limitation of conscription. Everyone, France not excepted, proposes the abolition of gas and bacteriological warfare. It would seem to the plain man that something ought to emerge from all this, and we hope that something will. But experience has taught us to expect difficulties when we come down from the general to the particular. And a still more formidable difficulty will be the attitude of the French, which we discuss in a leading article. The French plan is not a disarmament plan at all; it remains to be seen whether they really intend to upset the apple-cart. If they decided to be reasonable, they could not only rid the world of some of its load of expense and anxiety; they could satisfy the German demand for "equality." So long as that demand remains unsatisfied, the cause of peace will be precarious.

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A storm has blown up in Germany—and its rumbles have got to Geneva—over the port of Memel. Memel was taken from the Germans by the Treaty of Versailles and put in the hands of the Allied Powers, and it had a troubled history till 1924. It was then given a peculiar status. It enjoys autonomy under Lithuanian sovereignty, with a Directory of three members, who are citizens of the town and guaranteed in their positions so long as they have the confidence of the local Diet. Herr Böttcher, the President of the Directory, was suddenly seized by Lithuanian troops last week on the charge of treason. Apparently he had recently gone to Berlin—to discuss the importation of German pigs, he says; for more sinister purposes, according to his accusers. The Directory satisfied the Diet that there was nothing wrong, but the Lithuanian Government still hold Herr Böttcher under open arrest. Germany fears the worst, and has appealed to the Council of the League to intervene in this violation of an International Statute, and to prevent the annexation and de-Germanisation of Memel. If Lithuania has any such design it certainly ought to be nipped in the bud without delay. We have had quite enough experience of high-handed action and its disastrous results in that part of the world.

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The Government is holding its own in India and may do so for some time yet. The old story is being repeated. Every new batch of prisoners (it is estimated that more than 30,000 Hindus are now in gaol) creates a new batch of converts to the extremer forms of Nationalism. As long as this policy is pursued, so long will there be these terrible attempts upon the lives of British civil servants by fanatical young men and women. The Government now has a new and very difficult problem to solve. The All-Indian Moslem League has met again and is discussing whether it will co-operate with the Franchise Committee. The strength of Moslem indignation against the repression of the "red-shirt" movement (which has nothing to do with the red shirts of Bolshevism) has revealed that that movement represented in large part genuine Moslem ambitions. The All-Indian Moslem League now suggests that all the claims put forward by the Moslems at the Round Table Conference—the statutory majority in the Punjab and Bengal, the separate electorates, residuary powers and the rest of it—shall be granted by the British Government as the price of co-operation. Lord Lothian has promised to transmit this proposition

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A NOBLE AND INGENIOUS PLAN

THERE has been big talk at Geneva this week, and if words meant all they ought to, the makers of guns and gases should be looking out for some more profitable occupation. The great military Powers of Europe and America have been profuse in their expressions of good will. They have denounced the folly and the waste of war and—with one significant exception—they have declared for limitation and reduction of armaments. The exception is France, who continues to demand security. Hardly had the Conference opened when M. Tardieu tabled a set of proposals which have been described by M. Poincaré as "a noble and ingenious plan." The nobility, we are bound to say, is not very obvious; the ingenuity is as plain as a pikestaff.

The plan is in essence an old one, but it has some new and audacious features. Its central idea is the League of Nations armed to keep the peace of the world. The League is to dispose of heavy bombing machines in the air, of heavy land batteries, of ships of more than 10,000 tons and carrying guns of over 8-inch calibre, and of the larger submarines—that is to say, it is to have the right to call on the nation States for the loan of all or any of these in the event of the Council deciding an action against an "aggressor." It is to have, besides, a regular army, or "police force," of its own, to which each State is to supply a contingent. And in order to prevent the conversion of commercial aircraft into military machines, civil aviation is to be internationalised under the control of the League. With all this will go pledges to accept compulsory arbitration as the method of settling disputes, and certain measures for humanising warfare, such as a ban on poison gases and bacteria, and on air-bombing more than a certain distance behind the battle line.

Here is a choice, we are told, between "a League disposing of an executive authority and a League paralysed by the intransigence of national sovereignty." If that were all, we should have no little fault to find with the plan. The notion of a "super-State" as the guardian of peace, the arbiter of disputes, the upholder of justice, the regulator of relations between peoples, has no terrors for us. The pooling of security is the only sane and safe method of achieving what everyone wants. And if force must be used to prevent aggression or stop war, it is best that it should be applied collectively. An international police-force is as sound a principle for Great Britain and France and Germany abroad as a national police force is for British and French and German citizens at home. In so far, then, as M. Tardieu's plan points to this principle, we can welcome it. But alas! a moment's glance at the practical details of the plan freezes the welcome on our lips. There is no hint of disarmament in it. It does not suggest that big guns and battleships and bombing planes should be scrapped—only that they should be borrowed by the League, if and when the League thinks fit. Each nation is to be protected by the arms of others, not in return for the diminution of its own, but in addition. This is not what was envisaged in the Peace Treaty and the Covenant; this is not what the present Conference at Geneva was called for. This simply flouts the demand, the legitimate demand, of Germany for equality. And the proposal to internationalise civil aviation, reasonable as it might be in different circumstances, again flouts the German demand. It is patently dictated by the French fear of Germany. M. Poincaré's eye must be a microscope if it can detect "nobility" in all this! But how ingenious it is—from the point of view of the French nationalists and conservatives—has been shown by their own as well as their adversaries' comments. It has been openly hailed by French publicists as a "counter-proposal to disarmament," a method of diverting the Conference from its proper business, of changing the issue from what France does not want to what she does want, of throwing a bone of contention among the pacifists and internationalists. It may even help to deceive voters at the General Election next May.

But there are further objections of a very practical nature. Not only must the creation of an international army or police force, if it is to be acceptable, follow, and not precede, drastic reductions of national armaments. It must be endorsed and supported by all, or at least by all the important States. It will not be endorsed or supported by America or by Russia; M. Tardieu and his friends are under no illusions about that. How then can they expect others to support it? An armed League of the nations of the world is one thing; an armed League of some of the nations of Europe—and armed in such a way—is quite another. Its result would not be security, but increased danger and almost certain disaster.

There is ample justification, then, for the objections that are raised on all sides against the "noble and ingenious" plan. It asks too much and gives too little. It promises no lightening of the burden of armaments. It antagonises Germany. It ignores the position of the United States and the U.S.S.R. It ignores almost everything, indeed, except the fears and desires of France—or of a part of France. It is simply not practical politics. But let us not play the British Pharisee. We have not much ground for national self-satisfaction about the League and about disarmament. Every country is prone to make the League in its own image, to exploit it—or cold-shoulder it—in its particular interests. French statesmen aim at using it positively as an instrument of French aggrandisement. British statesmen in general (we are not, of course, speaking of men like Lord Cecil or Mr. Henderson) are more negative; they pay it lip service and try to forget its inconvenient obligations. At this moment, it is true, we are at Geneva in good faith, ready with our proposals for disarmament. The proposals are not all they should be. They do not include the 25 per cent. budgetary cut urged by the united voices of the League of Nations Unions throughout Europe. They do not include the abolition of big battleships. We hope that, when the time comes to discuss them, Sir John Simon will be prepared to go farther. If he is, and if the United States and Italy march with him, as on the main points they seem likely to do, then France will be put to the test. If other countries express a real willingness to accept the principle of pooled security, but take the stand that an international police force is a fair proposition provided only that there is a large general

reduction of armaments, what good reason can M. Tardieu advance for refusing to proceed at once and in sober earnest to the Draft Convention? If he does that, we may get some agreed measures of disarmament that will be worth having. And to get these will not mean sacrificing the ideal which is hidden under this disingenuous French plan. It will be the first necessary step in the process of realising that ideal.

A THREE-DECKER TARIFF

ENGLAND has become a Protectionist country. It would be easy, but not in the circumstances profitable, to enter once again into the familiar commonplaces of the tariff controversy and to make Mr. Chamberlain's Tariff Bill the text for another homily on the vices of Protection. Ever since the General Election, the size of the Conservative majority has made a tariff inevitable, and the only open questions have been its extent and the height of the duties to be imposed, the position of Empire countries, and its temporariness or permanence.

About some of these things we now know, while about others we are still in the dark. We know—a point of vital importance—that the tariff is to be permanent, and so involved in bargains with the Dominions and with foreign countries as to make its removal very difficult indeed, even if the emergency which furnishes its excuse should be completely overcome. We know too, that it is to be a "two-decker," with a flat-rate duty of ten per cent. on almost all imports except wheat, meat, wool and cotton, and varying higher duties on a range of articles still to be determined. We do not know how high these higher duties are to be, or on what goods they are to be levied. Nor shall we know, until after the Ottawa Conference, what is to be the position of the Dominions in relation either to them or to the "lower-deck" duty of ten per cent. We do know, however, that this tariff of all the virtues—or vices—is to be not only an instrument of protection and a revenue-raising expedient, but also a bargaining tariff, with special provision for discriminative "tariff-user" duties of as much as 100 per cent. over and above both the 10 per cent. and the unknown higher duties which are to be imposed by the new Tariff Commission.

These unknown factors are of vital importance. But there is enough in the known factors to furnish plenty of ground for comment. By far the most serious thing about the new tariff is its permanence. Mr. Chamberlain and his colleagues will doubtless argue that a merely temporary tariff would have furnished no basis for bargaining either with the Dominions or with foreign countries. This is largely true. It is, in effect, impossible to apply a "bargaining" tariff, as distinct from one intended only for revenue or for protection, without mortgaging the future. But, apart from the question whether a tariff for revenue or for protection is desirable or not, is a tariff for bargaining desirable? Bargaining tariffs are among the most unpleasant and discredited of all fiscal instruments, and, in the light of history, far more effective in provoking retaliation than in securing the reduction of duties by agreement. This is the worst feature of the Government's proposals. It points, not towards that lowering of tariff walls for which sane opinion all the world over is crying out, but to a race to raise the walls yet higher.

Unless, however, the Government had proposed a bargaining tariff, there would have been no excuse for making a permanent one. In as far as Parliament has a mandate for a tariff, that mandate is clearly confined to an emergency measure designed to rectify the present abnormally adverse balance of trade and payments. They had a right to propose measures on the lines of the Abnormal Importations Act, and to push these measures farther. They had no warrant for imposing a permanent change on our fiscal system.

But neither Mr. Chamberlain nor his cheering followers made any bones last week or this about the permanence of the change. The cheers were loudest whenever allusion was made to this aspect of the scheme. Of course, that is natural enough. They wanted a tariff long before there was an emergency: the emergency has given them a chance of getting it; but they have no intention of letting it slip when the emergency is over.

So we are to have our "two-decker," or rather "three-decker" in view of the provision for special discriminating duties, as a permanency, and not merely as a means of rectifying the balance of trade. In the first place, we are to have a general, or almost general, tariff for revenue, levied at a flat rate. This revenue tariff is very different, in both circumstance and conception, from the proposal sponsored by Mr. Keynes and others some time ago. For, in the first place, that was put forward mainly as a means of offsetting the over valuation of sterling consequent on our return to the gold standard. But we are no longer on the gold standard, and sterling has depreciated by a good deal more than a quarter since then. So that argument is gone, and more than gone. Secondly, Mr. Keynes, at any rate recognising the dangers of the proposal to the export trade, proposed to combine the revenue tariff with a corresponding bounty on exports. Mr. Chamberlain also contemplates drawbacks, not however in respect of the ten per cent., but only of the higher duties to be levied on selected articles. How, in face of this, he can argue that a revenue tariff levied on most of the raw and semi-finished materials of industry is likely to stimulate exports, we cannot imagine. Yet he certainly does, though he wisely refrained last week from telling Parliament why.

The revenue tax of ten per cent. is bound to raise costs in this country—both costs of manufacture and costs of living. It will not, of course, raise either by a very startling percentage; and it is quite possible our prices will not rise at all—if, as during the past few months, gold prices in the world continue to fall. But under such conditions the failure of our prices to fall too will in effect mean a relative rise in the cost of our goods to the rest of the world, and in the cost of living in this country; and, so far from helping the pound to maintain its value in terms of other currencies, it will in the long run lead to its further depreciation.

But this is not all. On top of the revenue duties which are also protective, we are to have the unspecified protective duties which are also for revenue. And in this matter we are to be almost completely in the hands of the new Tariff Commission, since the ratification of the proposals cannot be, at least in the present Parliament, more than the merest formality—unless, indeed, Mr. Amery and his friends succeed in referring them back in order to get the duties increased. There seems to be practically no limit to the range of articles on which these higher duties can be imposed, or to the height of the duties: so that we may find ourselves before long with an almost general tariff, not of ten per cent., but of several times ten per cent., with proportionately greater effects on British costs and prices. It is true that there are vague hints that these higher duties are to be made conditional on due regard for the consumers' interests, and on adequate efficiency in the industries which benefit. But it is impossible to take at any rate the latter safeguard seriously. How can a Tariff Commission with orders to deal with the whole range of imports possibly be an appropriate tribunal for judging the efficiency of each separate industry—much less a body capable of giving a constructive lead towards measures of reorganisation?

What, then, ought the Government to have done, on the assumption (which we are bound to make, whether it is true or not, in view of the Government's composition) that something more, something over and above our departure from the gold standard and our existing restrictions on imports,

needed to be done in order to rectify the balance of trade and payments? (Incidentally, we may say that we feel the gravest doubts about Mr. Chamberlain's estimate of the size of the adverse balance of 1931.)

First, any measure adopted should have been strictly temporary, and all semblance of a bargaining tariff should have been carefully avoided. Secondly, there should have been no general tariff applicable to raw or semi-finished materials vital to British industry. Thirdly, it would have been better to proceed farther on the lines of the Abnormal Importations Act, by means of almost prohibitive duties on a narrow range of articles, than to impose protection over a wide field; and it would have been far wiser, in certain cases at least, to restrict imports by a licensing system similar to that of the Dyestuffs Act than by the imposition of duties. Fourthly, the device of a Tariff Commission is a disastrous mistake. Where there are to be duties or prohibitions, the Government itself ought to take responsibility for them, and not to hand them over to a small board of irresponsible persons. It is true that the Commission is in force only to advise, and not to decide: but in fact it is evidently meant to be usually the determining influence.

There was, however, at no stage much hope, after the election results were known, that counsels of sanity would prevail. The protectionists were out for blood; and blood they were bound to have. We do not suggest that the new tariff will ruin the country, though it is certainly not calculated to save it. It is merely one more serious blunder, from the standpoint both of the nation and of the world. It is one more obstacle in the way of economic recovery. And there were obstacles enough without adding another.

A LONDON DIARY

I FIND that it is generally believed among the people with the best chances of knowing that there is a secret understanding between the French and the Japanese Governments, and also that a large sum of Japanese money has been used to bribe the Parisian press. There would not, of course, be anything surprising in this. We have full documentary evidence—in some cases giving the cheques paid to each paper—of the money spent by Russia in order to gain a "good press" in Paris before the war. The significant thing is that whereas the bombing of Shanghai has brought some sense of proportion into the English papers, the Paris ones remain violently pro-Japanese. That marks the difference between mere prejudice and prejudice fortified by bribes. The thing that frightens me most is that anti-Russian prejudice is so strong that it is kept alive without bribes. A little pamphlet called "The Manchurian Dispute" has just been published by S.S.I.P. (as the new Socialist propagandist body calls itself). In analysing the news about the Far East in an English newspaper, the pamphlet makes a special examination of the treatment of last November's rumour that Russian troops were being used on the Chinese side in Manchuria. The rumour was knocked on the head by the explicit denials of the Japanese, Chinese and Soviet authorities. But the space given to the rumour and to its denial in different papers is illuminating. According to this pamphlet, the *Times* gave 11 lines to the rumour and 9 to the denial. The *Manchester Guardian* 15 to the rumour and 83 to the denial. The *News Chronicle* reported the rumour in 5 lines and denied it in 4. The *Daily Herald*, which took 6 lines to report the story, denied it in 41. The *Daily Express* gave 36 to the rumour and 5 to its denial. The *Daily Mail* splashed the story in 50 lines and seems not even to have mentioned that it had been proved untrue. The new rumours of trouble in Vladivostok should, I suggest, be taken with some caution.

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On Monday last Mr. de Montalk, a New Zealander of Polish descent, was sentenced by Sir Ernest Wild, the Recorder of London, to six months' imprisonment in the second division, after a jury had found him guilty of "uttering and publishing an obscene libel." The case raises issues of very great importance. Let me first state the facts shortly. De Montalk is a poet, who takes his work seriously. (He has published two or three books which have been praised by very competent critics.) He took copies of half a dozen poems, including a translation of Rabelais' well-known poem in which a lady arms her husband for battle, and a savage attack on Verlaine, to a printer. The poems contained several words not usually—though occasionally—printed. The printer first boggled at printing them on the ground of obscenity and then, when Mr. de Montalk had gone, took the poems to the police. It will be seen that "uttering and publishing" are in this case purely technical: no one had seen the poems, except the printer, until he summoned the police—by now twelve jurymen, the police, solicitors, counsel and Sir Ernest Wild have all been in danger of depravation. It was stated in court that Mr. de Montalk did not intend to publish the poems; he only wished them in type for convenience of circulation among a few friends.

* * *

Even if the poems had not been the work of a serious professional poet, but mere pornography, I imagine most people would call the Recorder's sentence surprising: six months' imprisonment for failure to get something printed seems a lot. Sir Ernest Wild's own remarks in the trial are worth quoting. He referred to the case as a filthy one, suggested to the women jurors that their services might be spared and said (I quote the report in the *Morning Post*) that he "was determined that as far as possible literature should be protected against offal of this kind."

* * *

Now the serious point is this. Is it the business of the police or of the courts to protect literature against defilement before it is, in the usual sense, published? The usual defence of our law of obscene libel is that it checks the sale of pornography. Probably most people in this country are in favour of some restriction on grounds of public decency. But I have never heard anyone defend the strict application of the present law. Its scope is indefensibly wide and we only retain it because our authorities usually show discretion in applying it. It is technically an obscene libel to post a letter which includes an "obscene" word (the words commonly regarded as obscene change with each generation) and, as we have seen in this case, it is technically an obscene libel to take such words to a printer. Obviously the law is in this case reduced to an absurdity. No one's morals were corrupted, no one's sense of decency outraged, no innocent youth contaminated. Therefore, the whole case for applying the law, as defended by its more intelligent advocates, falls to the ground. I hope there will be an appeal and the real issues of liberty and censorship—very far-reaching ones—will be fully discussed when Mr. de Montalk's case is again considered.

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It has just occurred to me that we English may seem just as comic to Hindus as the Babu does to us. I do not only mean that Hindustani, as spoken by British residents in India, must often be just as funny as English spoken by Babus. I suppose an Indian *Punch* would be full of the most marvellous examples of pidgin-Hindustani. But I was rather thinking of the things we say in our newspapers about India. I like the geography of the Calcutta *Statesman* when it says that "Mr. Gandhi has been piling Pelion upon Ossa in a series of Himalayan blunders." Better still is the *Daily Mail's* Special Correspondent, who noticed, in his description of Gandhi's departure from India, the Mahatma's "propaganda laugh, to be duly recorded in the Nationalist papers." The *Daily Express*, too, must

have been causing some smiles (for Indians have a sense of humour of their own). A few weeks ago (January 16th) it declared that "there have been cases of European women being actually molested" and then proceeded to explain that molestation consisted in "making a gesture or saying, 'Don't Buy British.' A gesture consists in joining the hands together in a prayer-like attitude."

* * *

But the first prize, both for imaginative ingenuity and masterly English, goes to a writer in a Lancashire paper. As an Englishman or a Lancastrian he realises the vital necessity of ending the appalling drain of cotton goods from this country to India. At any rate, he is clearly determined to leave no stone unturned in a heroic effort to perpetuate the enmity of our Indian customers. Could any Babu beat this?

> The methods adopted by the Congress Party in stirring up strife amongst the working classes are diabolical in construction. The *modus operandi* is for several of its followers to mix amongst the workers, offering sweetmeats so dearly loved and desired by the people they are casting their eyes on to do their dirty work. Contained in these sweetmeats are drugs not noticeable to the taste, the action of which raises the frenzy of the men, who, under the hypnotic spell set up, are ready for any dirty work these followers take care to inculcate in a few of the men's minds whom they have chosen as leaders. From such sources and by such measures the Peshawar and Sholapur atrocities were brought about, by the use of methods herein described. The resultant effect is that the poor workers are left to suffer, whilst the instigators clear out to newer pastures, to again commence to reach workers' hearts by again giving pure sweetmeats until the time is again ripe for their devilish work to be begun.

I don't think I can cap that. There is probably only one person who could, and that is Mr. Heath Robinson, who might easily be imagined as illustrating a scheme for defeating the Government by giving boiled sweets to the children of electors. As for framing the necessary Ordinance against sweetmeats, I leave that to the present Government of India.

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A friend of mine in New York writes that Wall Street is so quiet that you can hear the passing of a dividend. I should have thought the falling of the shares would have drowned all other sounds. CRITIC.

THE LESSON OF DARTMOOR

MR. DU PARCQ'S report about Dartmoor is the full and frank statement we expected of him, and there is probably little more to be learnt about the actual outbreak on January 24th. But there is much to be learnt from it. It will come as a shock to most people to learn that some of the prison officers are suspected of having trafficked in tools to assist escapes, though we hope it will come as an even greater shock to discover that the starting pay of a prison officer at the age of twenty-four, including war bonus, is only 43s. 6d. a week.

Mr. du Parcq completely disposes of the foolish suggestion that the outbreak was due to reforms in present-day prison administration, though he does not say—as well he might—that Dartmoor, on account of its isolated position, has been largely outside the operation of such reforms. In fact, only about 150 of the 440 prisoners there were being seen by prison visitors or were attending classes, and because of recent reductions in staff prisoners have recently been spending longer periods shut up alone in their cells. The affair has again demonstrated the fact, well known to the authorities if not to the public, that the murderer is not the worst kind of prisoner. There was only one murderer at Dartmoor on the day of the riot and he came to the assistance of the authorities.

But what are we trying to do in our prisons? That is the most important question. People have been speaking and writing about humane methods, about greater leniency or stricter discipline, as if prison administration was mainly a question of a prisoner's comfort or discomfort. In the days of John Howard prison reform, perhaps not without cause, did usually resolve itself into this sort of physical problem, but such talk to-day, unrelated to some constructive purpose, is in either direction pure sentiment. And what we need in our treatment of crime is not sentiment but sense.

One lesson to be learnt from Dartmoor is that it is insufficient just to feed prisoners' bodies, even with unwatered porridge; they have minds as well as bodies. For a number of years, at other prisons, there has been an extensive educational system combined with the individual visitation of prisoners by suitable social workers. Such work has become, to quote a recent Prison Commissioners' Report, "an essential feature of any system which has for its object the rehabilitation of a social failure." Yet Dartmoor has had no educational adviser, and because of its isolation never can have an adequate supply of voluntary workers. And their contribution cannot by its very nature be given by officials. That is why Dartmoor must go.

If every convict at Princetown had been visited regularly, or attended classes in the evening instead of being shut up in his cell to brood upon ways of getting out of it from four o'clock in the afternoon until next morning, we wonder whether there would have been a riot at all. It certainly would not have been so extensive.

But there are other and even more fundamental problems to be faced. When the *Times* speaks of the new type of criminal at Dartmoor as "vicious beyond reclamation," we are prompted to ask whether the community can afford to say this when so little constructive effort has been made to reform him. The Dartmoor prisoner is a recidivist. What did society do either to train him in citizenship when he first went to prison or to reclaim him when he first came out? The report speaks of a few of these "modern" criminals as being "leaders of men." Well, can we devise no method of giving them an outlet for their abilities? Experience has shown that men with even the worst possible records have gone straight when they have been given a real opportunity of earning an honest living. Prison industries which are still notoriously antiquated should be equipped to teach men trades. If approached in the right way, the Trade Unions might well co-operate in such a reorganisation. We are tired of hearing people say that the Trade Unions would oppose any such reform when in fact they have never been properly approached. Even if there were difficulties about selling prison-made goods in the open market (there would not be, if prisoners were paid wages) the Post Office, the Office of Works, and the Stationery Office could probably, in any case, utilise the increased output of printing, office equipment, and the other articles they already make. And the whole problem of after-care needs overhauling. It is a foolish economy which releases a man after his first dose of prison with no help but a few shillings in his pocket, only to turn up at Dartmoor a few years later at a cost to the State of hundreds of pounds.

The most effective way of dealing with the Dartmoor type of offender is as far as possible to prevent his coming into existence by wiser penal methods. Yet at this very moment a penny-wise Treasury has excluded from the Children Bill, now before Parliament, provision for the Observation Centres recommended by the Young Offenders' Committee, which are urgently needed to secure expert guidance in the treatment of juvenile delinquency.

The Dartmoor outbreak and Mr. du Parcq's report have thrown a searchlight on one section of our penal system, but this cannot be separated from the many other parts of the same system with which it is closely related. The time has come when there should be a thorough review of our whole treatment of crime. We have been well served in recent years by our Prison Commissioners, and we are full of praise for much that they have done Yet it is

nearly forty years since the Departmental Committee on Prisons of 1894–5 issued its report, and not only our outlook but the whole problem of crime has changed completely since then. It is common knowledge that our prison authorities are being handicapped by the Treasury from carrying out many of their more constructive reforms, and it is time that what the Commissioners have done, and what they would like to do, should be considered by a strong Royal Commission. It is no extravagance but an economy to effect constructive reforms which may save the country from the wasteful expense of Dartmoor, with or without a riot.

FIFTY YEARS AGO

A NUMBER of eminent men have been contributing a series of articles to the *Times*, recalling the world as they knew it fifty years ago. I have read their articles with considerable envy, for, though I, too, was alive fifty years ago, I remember nothing at all, or almost nothing, of the period. It is true that at the beginning of the year 1882 I was only between two and three years old; but is not that the age of our most vivid observation? It is an age at which the pleasure of observation is so acute that we can follow the coursing of a raindrop down a window-pane with as much engrossment as though it were a living thing in motion. Never in later life do we note the stirring of an individual leaf so absorbedly. The pattern of a wallpaper is studied and known in every tiny detail as a map is studied and known by a geographer. We gaze at the coloured world of a soap-bubble with an intensity of wonder such as awed Cortes and all his men into silence. Not a human being can move, not a cat or a dog or a cow can move, but our quick glances follow every change of attitude or appearance. I am sure that at that age I could have gone on watching my uncle shaving with an old-fashioned razor even if the shave had lasted from sunrise to sunset. I know of few more satisfying sounds and sights—for a child—than the sound of a razor scraping its way through a stubble of beard and the sight of that gleaming knife removing the deep snow of soap from a jaw left exquisitely clean. Modern psychologists would probably explain the infantile pleasure in watching an uncle shaving by the theory that the child secretly hopes that his uncle will cut himself and so is keyed up to unusual excitement. I do not think that this can be the real explanation, however, for the child watches with the same attention events that have no danger in them. Fragments of twig swept along the surface of a stream and tackled by a three-quarter line of stones will afford a pleasure that lasts from one meal to another. There is no peril in the motes that dance in the sunbeam that slopes towards the nursery floor, but the child does not tire of looking at them. It is an age of observation for observation's sake, when a match struck by a smoker and held above a pipe with its sucked-in flame is no less a source of delight than the mountain-range of foam flung up the sands by a riotous sea—when the movement of the second hand on the dial of a grandfather's clock, no less than the falling of chestnuts through the still air of autumn, is a spellbinding spectacle.

Yet, somehow, though we have observed all these things so intensely, few of us retain many clear memories of our infancy. The first thing that I can remember is standing beside a perambulator at the edge of a pond while swans were being fed; and this must have happened at a very early age, since it is a memory of the first neighbourhood in which I lived and which we left when I was still an infant. But I am not sure that I remember the incident of the bicycle running over me at Oban—an incident which occurred when I was two. I can see the incident, no doubt, clearly enough in my memory—a fractious child tugging away from a nurse who is doing her best to keep it on the footpath while steering a perambulator, a breakaway and a tumble on the road, with the result that a hurrying man on an old high bicycle of the penny-farthing type is unable to avoid me and runs his machine over my forehead (leaving a furrow, of which the mark remains at the present day), the bawling return home, where a beef-steak is hurriedly fetched from the butcher's and applied raw to the wound. All this is as clear to me as last year's motor accident, but I am not sure how much of it is first-hand memory and how much is memory of my nurse's later loving recitals of the epical adventure, including the cyclist's abrupt flight from the town. I am almost certain, however, that I do remember something of Oban. I remember a very steep street and a toy-shop of the kind that is crammed with little boats and the paraphernalia of the seaside. In my memory, the shop stood at the top of the steep street, but when I visited Oban again two years ago it seemed to me unlikely that there had ever been a shop there except near the sea-front. So that I cannot swear to possessing a single indisputable memory of the world as it was fifty years ago.

Yet here I was living through the heyday of the aesthetic movement, and through the long duel between Gladstone and Parnell—events that might have stirred the imagination of a child less deeply immersed in the motes dancing in sunbeams. Gladstone, however, for all his genius, was a less important figure in my life than my nurse as she rose, while it was yet dark, on a winter morning, lit the nursery fire, and put the kettle on to make herself a cup of tea. Who could watch without elation the lighting of a matutinal fire—the clearing of yesterday's ashes from the cold, dark, shabby grate, the deft building-up of a new day's warmth with paper, sticks, and coal, the lit match that sets the paper blazing, the crackle of the sticks, the first lapping of the gas-flames among the coals? The modern nursery, with its too practical gas-stove, can offer no such excitement of creation to begin the day with. Then came the singing of the kettle, and the nurse, saying: "The kettle's boiling. I'll wet the tea," opened a cupboard where she kept her treasures of tea and sugar and milk, and made herself a cup of tea that seemed to impregnate the room with its powerful odour. After she had drunk it she took down a small paper parcel from the mantelpiece and had a pinch of snuff.

I am glad to think that there are children living to-day who fifty years hence will remember as little of the year 1932 as I remember of the year 1882. They are living in a world that does not know whether or not it has heard the crack of doom—a world that seems to have gone mad—and they know less about it than about the much more alarming gurgle of the disappearing bath water. We are all of us living under oppression—some of us under the oppression of taxes, others under the oppression of a poverty that keeps us below the taxpaying level; yet these two-year-olds are less interested in the economic situation than in the ticking of a stranger's watch. Will these infants, too, when they have reached years of discretion, continue to make the public life of the world a form of multiple madness? Will they go on, at every crisis, backing the wrong horse till the right horse teaches them sense by winning? Will they continue to see in international relations a game of universal poker in which nearly all the bluffs are stupid and in which all the winnings are paid in fairy gold? If they do, there is much to be said for us all retiring to the nursery for the rest of our lives and concentrating our minds on toy bricks and soap-bubbles instead of wasting our thoughts on politics.

These things remain happily in our memories, but who over two years of age could find much happiness in remembering Europe as it was in 1932? But stay: the year is not yet ended. For centuries prophets have foretold that the day would yet come when man will no longer be a fool. Who knows but that that day may fall in 1932? If it does, what a date to remember—beautiful as the crackling blaze of a coal-fire lit in a nursery first thing on a winter morning!

Y. Y.

THE SANCTITY OF HUMAN LIFE

WE owe a great debt to Mr. Justice McCardie for the series of shocks which, in recent weeks, he has administered to our complacency. He has stripped off some of that picturesque ivy which serves to conceal the cracks in the structure of our domesticity. The judicial pronouncement which has most deeply stirred the public mind is that to which he gave utterance at the Leeds Assizes; where, after advocating an active propaganda of contraceptive methods, he urged that "the law of abortion should be amended. As it stands it does more harm than good." Precise figures showing the prevalence of abortion in modern countries are not easy to come by, but the lowest estimate is about 10 per cent. of all pregnancies. Mrs. Chance, in her recent book on *The Cost of English Morals*, says that "it would probably be difficult to find a single uninstructed poor and fertile mother who has not made some crude and furtive attempt to get rid of an unborn child." From my own fairly large experience, I have come to the conclusion that not less than 25 per cent. of all women in this country, married and unmarried, have, at some time in their lives, procured or attempted to procure abortion. In Dr. Parry's very informative book on *Criminal Abortion*,* just published, it is stated that in Germany, where the operation is still illegal, from half a million to a million abortions are performed each year.

To many people, the question involved in the legalisation of abortion will seem a comparatively simple one, which may be stated thus. Through their ignorance of contraception, a very large number of women, married and single, become pregnant with children whose birth is neither desired nor desirable. Of these women, many will, at great risk to their own health and lives, as well as to their unborn children, resort to noxious drugs or to unskilled instrumental interference, furtively carried out in circumstances where the necessity for speed and privacy outweighs that for technical care and asepsis. Surely, it is argued, rather than allow this state of things to continue—for it cannot be suppressed—it were better to recognise the facts, however unpleasant and regrettable, and, by legalising abortion if performed by skilled surgeons in properly equipped hospitals, avoid most of the hygienic, and many of the moral, evils attendant on the present situation.

The Roman Catholic position is equally clear. As stated by the late Catholic Bishop of Boston, it is "that the destruction of the human fœtus in the womb of the mother, at any period from the first instant of conception, is a heinous crime, equal at least, in guilt, to that of murder. . . . He is a criminal, a murderer, who deals an exterminating blow to the incipient man, and drives back into nothingness a being to whom God designed to give a living body and an immortal soul." Here we have a postulate which we may accept or repudiate; but can neither support nor defeat by argument.

Those fortunate people who are possessed of a religious faith that defines in detail the rights and the wrongs and the final purposes of human life are confronted with relatively small problems. They have but to observe the rules laid down for them, rules whose absoluteness of authority they do not dispute. For most of us, however, working hypotheses in moral science, as in the laboratory, can but be provisional. How nearly do they fit the needs of the body and mind of man? We have nothing but this pragmatic test whereby to judge, to measure, or to compare.

Faith, instinct, convention; these three. Where else can we look for any hint as to the destination or the purpose of our lives? Simple folk, unaccustomed to assume responsibility for their codes of conduct, often take it for granted that, as a director of human action, science has taken over the work of out-of-date religion. This, however, is a misconception. Science may be an admirable compass; but we do not book our passage by compass. Let us face and conscientiously answer these questions: Why do we denounce murder? Why do so many of us denounce war? Why does vivisection give us pause? In what prejudice or postulate lies the secret of our growing revulsion against hunting and shooting? Our social instinct forces us to feel the pain imposed on others, once we have imagined it. Is painless murder, then, without offence—to be judged by the laws of expediency only? Is the better privileged to eliminate the less good; the stronger to eliminate the weaker?

It is one of the finest traditions of the medical profession that, in the practice of his craft, the doctor shall pay no regard to differences in worldly status, in moral worth, or in social importance. It is not for him to judge between the value of one life and that of another. In the practice of medicine, the claims of the individual, lowly and mighty equally, hold as fundamental a position as in the tenets of Christianity. It would indeed be a life of endless and unconquerable difficulty were the doctor to take on himself the responsibility of deciding which of the lives of his patients were best worth saving. Yet there are occasions when every doctor, not of the Roman Catholic faith, is confronted with the task of deciding which of two lives has greater value, where one can survive only at the cost of the other. As between a pregnant woman and the unborn child within her, few doctors to-day would hesitate, if such choice had to be made.

The problem which arises, however, when the mother's life is not actually at stake is often not an easy one for the imaginative doctor. Again and again he is appealed to for technical help in a situation which moves every particle of sympathy within him. If he is a good Catholic, his course is clear, even though it be an unpleasant one. But, for the rest, the moral problem remains. He can answer distress with unctuous maxims, hoping thus to stifle his conscience and hide his cowardice. He can commercially exploit the opportunity, after the manner of the blackmailer. Or he can determine to follow the dictates of his conscience, and run the very great risk of finding himself in the criminal court, there to face disgrace for himself and ruin for those dependent on him.

Russia is the only country which officially recognises abortion as a legitimate method of restricting births; and there any woman, married or unmarried, who desires to have her pregnancy terminated during the first three months of its existence, is entitled to have the operation performed by a doctor. A full account of the procedure was recently given in the *Lancet* by Dr. Haden Guest. In Leningrad, the abortions officially tabulated considerably outnumber the live births. Apart from their frequency and official recognition, the most interesting fact about these operations, as performed in the public hospitals, is the small mortality rate. Dr. Guest states that, in one hospital he visited, in a series of forty thousand cases, spread over ten years, there had been only two deaths.

The hostility to abortion which is still widely manifested within the medical profession in this country is, for the most part, social and professional rather than religious, moral, or hygienic. The type of individual, often unskilled and reckless, who practises abortion for money, extorting what amounts to blackmail from poor working-girls and others already in distress, is, indeed, scarcely calculated to make a favourable appeal to men whose outstanding characteristics are technical pride and social respectability.

These, however, are not the considerations which will weigh with the public. Prejudice and convention will, as usual, play leading parts. At the same time, however distorted may be some of its common manifestations, it is hard to deny the attractiveness and the human superiority

* *Criminal Abortion.* By L. A. Parry. Bale, Sons and Danielsson. 10s 6d.

of the ideal of sex-love and maternity which has captured the imagination of the Western world in post-Christian centuries. Implicit in this ideal is a spiritual or transcendental element on which its peculiar value depends. We cannot afford to disregard this element.

HARRY ROBERTS.

AGREEMENT TO DIFFER

Any candid Protectionist to any dissentient Liberal.

GO on with your speeches! To talk as they choose
Is a privilege granted to people who lose,
And the bargain should please each political section
If you have your grievance and we our protection.

'Tis true, when our need of your aid was disclosed,
That "emergency tariffs" were all we proposed;
For "emergency tariffs" you might be prepared,
So we hid *our* intentions lest *you* should be scared.

But when, with some strain to our conscience, and throats,
We had captured our quota of Liberal votes
And made our seats safe, you could hardly expect
That our practical programme our words should reflect.

For to bring in Protection full-fledged; to install
On a permanent basis a new tariff-wall
With the aid of Free Traders (a delicate feat),
Was a chance which, if missed, Fate would hardly repeat.

So go on with your speeches! Let this be our pact—
With you be consistency, logic, and fact;
With us a majority, pledged to take action,
'Neath a national mask, on the plans of a faction.

MACFLECKNOE.

Correspondence

SHANGHAI

To the Editor of THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION.

SIR,—For the past four months the rising tide of Japanese militarism has been going on unchecked in the Far East. On January 29th, after the Mayor of Shanghai had complied with all the Japanese demands, the Japanese naval authorities, without provocation, launched an aerial bombardment on the crowded quarters of Chapei (Shanghai). In view of this shocking display of brute force, exemplified by the massacre of hundreds of civilians and the burning of thousands of homes, this Society, along with other cultural associations, feels itself justified in voicing its fear of further outrages to come unless public opinion definitely sets its face against a recurrence.

If Japan has, as she claims to have, a "good case" against China, it is difficult to understand why she has so far refused China's offer to have the whole dispute settled by arbitration. The post-war system is founded on the solemn understanding—yea, the promise to Europe's dead—that disputes, whenever they arise, shall be settled by the rule of law and not that of force. This new principle, so vital to-day if civilisation is to be preserved, is clearly being undermined. The Sino-Japanese problem is no longer a regional concern, but one which affects the welfare of the whole world. We therefore crave the support of your weighty influence towards the prevention of a possible repetition of the Shanghai outrage anywhere in China.

15 Polstead Road, Oxford. H. S. TAN, *President.*

The Oxford Chinese Students' Society.

THE COVENANT AND THE HAGUE

To the Editor of THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION.

SIR,—Article 24 of the Covenant places the International Bureau at the Hague under the direction of the League if the parties to the Hague Convention consent. That really means if the United States and Russia consent, because they both signed the Hague Convention but not the Covenant. If they consent, then Article 53 of the Hague Convention can be invoked by the League. This enables the Permanent Court at the Hague to settle the terms of reference of the dispute in Manchuria on the application of China in so far as that dispute is covered by a general treaty of Arbitration.

I think the dispute in Manchuria might be covered by this Article and it certainly deserves the attention of China.

2 Harcourt Buildings, E.C. R. C. HAWKIN.

THE FAMILY LIFE QUESTIONNAIRE

To the Editor of THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION.

SIR,—I am not proposing to reply to any general press criticism of the B.B.C. investigation of Changes in Family Life, except in so far as it may be necessary through the microphone to explain the nature of the investigation. As, however, after replying to some of this criticism, "Critic" asks a serious question as to a particular section of the form, I hope you will allow me to supply the answer.

The point of Section J on Meeting of Partners, as indeed of all other sections of the form, lies in the fact that any answers given can be related to the date of marriage; that is to say, it will be possible to compare later with earlier marriages in respect of this point as of others, and discover if there is any significant trend. This can be done even more directly if (as is provided for in the form) the experience of successive generations of the same family group is recorded in the several columns of Section J. The B.B.C. investigation is in essence a study of recent changes in family life, and the form is designed at all points to elucidate differences between one recent generation and the next.

I do not, of course, suggest that this particular section, J, is among the most important in the form; nor can one be certain in advance that any significant result will emerge from it. One cannot be certain of that in advance about any investigation whatsoever. It may tell us something or it may not.

Apart, however, from the direct possibilities of this particular question, there was a general consideration which led us to endeavour to keep something in the form bearing on the social side of the family as distinct from its vital and economic sides. The social side, though less susceptible of statistical measurement than other sides, is of great importance. As those who listen to Professor Ginsberg's talk will realise, the part played by the family at different stages of human history in facilitating or controlling the marriages of its members is a very interesting chapter of social history. There are many other points—such as the use of leisure—which a comprehensive study would include, though it seemed impossible to frame useful questions on them. But to have had nothing whatever in the Family Form bearing on the social side of the Family might have appeared a lack of imagination.

WILLIAM BEVERIDGE.

The London School of Economics, W.C.2.

BRITISH OPERA

To the Editor of THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION.

SIR,—In his article headed "Opera and the B.B.C." Mr. W. J. Turner seems in many respects to have a very imperfect understanding of the operatic situation generally.

He censures the Covent Garden Opera Syndicate for not having, at the time of writing, come to a decision as to whether or not to give an International Season at Covent Garden this summer; he does not appear to realise that the world is passing through a severe financial crisis, and that it is at least debatable whether the London public can afford to pay the high prices necessarily charged for Seasons of this quality. If the public should fail to respond, the Syndicate would be faced with a very heavy deficit to which no portion of the Subsidy could be applied.

Mr. Turner condemns the idea of an English Season instead of an International one this summer; my Syndicate has, however, never contemplated such a project. He says: "it is childish to pretend that there is to-day any British company equal to that of the International Seasons." Who *has* pretended this? No one, I should think, outside the walls of an asylum; certainly no one of the Covent Garden management. Does Mr. Turner not realise that the International Season is a kind of Festival, the artists for which are selected from all the principal Opera Houses of the world, and that they are the very *élite* of contemporary singers and conductors? Does he imagine that, outside similarly organised Festivals, any single Opera Company in Europe could reproduce casts such as these? Why should our English Company be condemned for not equalling that galaxy of international celebrities which London is accus-

tomed to hear at Covent Garden in the International Seasons, at about double the prices?

What I *do* claim, however, is that our English Company contains most of the best available British talent, and that the average standard of the performances is fully equal to that of ordinary Continental Opera Houses. Does Mr. Turner expect more? My own actual working experience in foreign theatres, and seven years in charge of the International Seasons at Covent Garden (which latter Mr. Turner is good enough to call "magnificent"), perhaps lends some authority to the above statement, and I shall always be grateful to our young British Company for the achievements which are being so much appreciated by audiences where the Company appears.

EUSTACE BLOIS.

To the Editor of THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION.

SIR,—Two points are raised in THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION dated February 6th, to which I feel I must reply.

Your correspondent "Popular Opera" says "The Old Vic and Sadler's Wells prove conclusively that popular grand opera either in London or the Provinces will fill a theatre all the year round." I cannot see how anything that is given in the Waterloo Road or Islington is thereby popularised in the Provinces. The popularity grand opera enjoys in the Provinces is entirely due to the Carl Rosa Opera Company—which has given grand opera everywhere in Great Britain for sixty-five years.

An unsigned paragraph, captioned "Verdi's Gaiety," opens with "I do not know how long it is since *The Masked Ball* was last performed in London, but I imagine at least fifteen years." Certainly the writer of that paragraph does not know. The Carl Rosa gave *The Masked Ball* on November 7th, 1927, at Hammersmith.

N. PHILLIPS.

Steinway Hall,
Hanover Square, W.1.

RUSSIAN TIMBER

To the Editor of THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION.

SIR,—The subject of Russian Timber has recently been given considerable prominence in the *Times* and the *Morning Post*.

One may differ entirely from the editorial opinions expressed, but I think that a tribute is due to the *Times* for the manner in which they presented the subject to their readers. On the very day on which they devoted their first leading article to an argument against allowing Russian imports, they published two letters from respected members of the trade which shed much light on the matter from a very different angle. Subsequently, they have published a further contribution pointing out the fallacies of the exclusionist argument. If all our daily papers presented news and comment in this way we should have much to be thankful for.

I do not think that anyone knowing the trade can doubt that an embargo on Russian imports would send up the price of soft woods with a rush. Personally, I would look for a rise of at least 25 per cent. Further, little or no extra business would go to Canadian shippers because they are not equipped to supply the very complicated needs of this market. A host of sawmills at present lying idle in Scandinavia, Finland, the Baltic States and Poland, would be restarted on the impetus of rising prices, and the gap caused by the stoppage of Russian shipments would eventually be filled from those sources and still Canadian shippers would be out of it.

I should say that the only means by which Canadian timber can be made to replace European supplies would be a preferential tariff and a high one at that—10 per cent. won't do it. The question is, can we afford such generosity?

9 Clements Lane, E.C.4. LAURENCE GANE.

THE BEET SUGAR SUBSIDY

To the Editor of THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION.

SIR,—May I ask the courtesy of your columns to make one or two points on the subject of the sugar-beet subsidy? One well-known group of factories have been advertising that they have paid out £7,000,000 for sugar beets since October, 1924. They do not say, however, that they have received from the taxpayer of this country more than £6,500,000 in subsidy and preference in excise duty. In other words, they have been made a *present* of their chief raw material by the man in the street, who has not the vaguest conception of what the subsidy means. To put it another way, during the years 1924–30, the beet sugar factories paid £17,876,934 for 9,668,854 tons of beet. The factories made sugar from these beets and sold the sugar to the public at ordinary market prices; the result to the factories was a profit of £8,000,000. The taxpayer provided £22,366,643 in subsidy and approximately £4,500,000 by remission of duty, so that the factories had not only their roots, *but also their profits* given to them as a present by the taxpayer. It would, therefore, have cost the taxpayer £8,000,000 less if he had paid the farmer for his sugar-beet roots and then burnt the whole lot! The only losers would have been the factory shareholders, 33 per cent. of whom are foreigners!

Or again—by the end of the subsidy period the taxpayer will have provided about £40,000,000 over ten years to enable British farmers to supply one ninth of Britain's sugar supply. To enable them to supply the whole requirements would, at the same rate, cost the taxpayer £40,000,000 per year (and he would have to pay for his sugar in the shops just the same)! He can import it at present rates for about £14,000,000.

The case is bad enough on its own merits, but when one comes to consider the unfortunate reactions—on the world sugar market, on the West Indies, on the self-supporting refineries—one can only conclude that the whole sugar-beet subsidy scheme was conceived in Bedlam.

CHARLES WILSON.

The Royal Automobile Club,
London, S.W.1.

HUMANITARIANS

To the Editor of THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION.

SIR,—I did not say, as Mr. Julian Bell suggests, that I "proposed" to persecute sportsmen for their evil state of mind. I said that if I were dictator I should be "tempted" to do so, which is quite different. Nor is Mr. Bell quite just in saying that I do not appreciate the difficulty of the humanitarian position. I understand perfectly the difficulty of the humanitarian and all other positions. Mr. Bell's ingenious and delightful father once wrote a poem in which he thanked God for having given him

> Enough of brain
> To make most problems fairly plain.

I have unfortunately only been endowed with enough brain to make them equally insoluble.

FRANCIS BIRRELL.

70 Elm Park Road,
Chelsea, S.W.

THE FEDERATION OF PROGRESSIVE SOCIETIES

To the Editor of THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION.

SIR,—The plans to co-ordinate the work of progressive societies, to which reference was made by "Critic" in your last issue, are now taking definite shape. A number of societies or groups, finding that they have similar aims, have already agreed to co-operate in the formation of a Federation of Progressive Societies, either as Federated Societies, accepting the whole of an agreed basis, or as Affiliated Societies, in general agreement with the aims of the Federation, but accepting only certain portions of the basis.

Your readers may be interested to know that a special group has been formed for people wishing to join the Federation as individual members. The Federation does *not* exist to promote discussion for its own sake; those who join will therefore be expected to assist in routine work, research and or propaganda.

The Federation has considerable plans, including the setting up Commissions of Investigation into current questions, the formation of a publicity service, for progressive societies, the organisation of joint propaganda on specific issues, the formation of a speakers' panel, and the issue of a monthly periodical, and a year-book of social progress. All of these things, and more, are possible if sufficient co-operation is forthcoming both from individuals and societies.

We know, Sir, that you will agree that there is a large gap in our social organisation which the political parties cannot attempt to fill. There is, in fact, an urgent need for the more effective organisation of those people who share a modern outlook not only in politics and economics, but also in matters affecting sex, education, religion, social amenities, and individual liberty. This will be the task of the Federation, and it will need the help of many keen workers and clear thinkers. May we, with your kind permission, invite all those who are interested, whether as individuals or as officials of societies, to write to the undersigned, who is acting temporarily as Secretary to the Federation?

9 Millman Street, W.C.1. WILLIAM N. WARBEY.

LYTTON STRACHEY AND GORDON

To the Editor of THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION.

SIR,—I must have expressed myself extremely badly for Mr. Nevinson to read what I said as a personal attack upon himself. A personal attack upon a man whom I have known and admired for many years was the last thing I intended. I referred to his review merely because it seemed to me to be a good example of a not uncommon misunderstanding of Lytton Strachey's work and character, and because it showed a wrong attitude towards the art or science of biography and history.

I have re-read the essay on Gordon in *Eminent Victorians*, and, as I thought, the only "charge" against Gordon is that occasionally he drank too much brandy and soda; it is an exaggeration when Mr. Nevinson says that Lytton Strachey charged Gordon "with the drunken habit of continually tippling brandy and soda." This is not a case in which Strachey disregarded evidence. The evidence for his account exists, although subsequent investigations may have thrown doubt upon its accuracy. But when Mr. Nevinson says that a biographer who has never known the heat and thirst of the tropics has no right to state that his biographer occasionally drank too much brandy and soda, I simply cannot understand what he means. When he says that Kitchener's reported statement to a third party that "the whole thing is a *damned lie*" is sufficient evidence for him, he shows an attitude towards historical evidence which seems to me even more dangerous than Strachey's occasional disregard of it. Finally, may I add that there was absolutely nothing in my article to imply that I can see no more in Gordon than "a distinguished soldier who read the Bible," so that I hope the gulf between Mr. Nevinson and myself may not be really quite so wide as he thinks it. LEONARD WOOLF.

DISRAELI

To the Editor of THE NEW STATESMAN AND NATION.

SIR,—"Critic" has been badly hoaxed. The alleged "passage" from "Coningsby" is an amalgam of disjointed quotations extending, in my edition, from p. 52 to p. 81. The passages refer to three separate ministries and the severest criticism applies not to the Reform Ministry with its great majority but to the Peel Ministry which succeeded it and to the Liverpool Ministry after the Congress of Vienna. Thus in order to indicate the horrors we may expect from a large parliamentary majority the compiler of this "passage" has gone to a master of vituperation and concentrated the criticism of three ministries extending over twenty years.

It is perhaps worth mentioning that Disraeli, referring to the Reform Ministry, points to the "secession of a considerable section of the Cabinet, some of them esteemed too, at that time, among its most efficient members" as an important cause of the Government's fall. CHAS. WRIGHT.

39 Worcester Road,
Sutton, Surrey.

Miscellany

CAT-CALL DAYS

IT bodes ill for the theatre and all it stands for when the masses lose their way to it. Abstention of the sort is as ominous as the flight of rats from an unsuspected ship. In Shakespeare's day, when the drama was at its greatest, the voice of the people was the voice of God, and no other voice has since spoken with unquestioned authority. To-day, when the toiling masses are partly abandoning and partly being closed out of the theatre, there should be a warning to us of sorts in the story of Restoration times, when the theatre somehow lost its popular appeal and degenerated into a mere court appanage. One result of this—perhaps the most appalling—was that open and honest judgment at once went by the board. The dramatist's right to a fair hearing no longer ruled. Even as early as 1663 Dryden saw fit in the prologue to *The Wild Gallant* to lament the predispositions of the lop-sided public of the time, averring that:

> Cruel factions (brib'd by interest) come
> Not to weigh merit, but to give their doom.

A decade later, the deliberate damning of plays had become a regular pastime. In 1675, Shadwell, in the prologue to *The Libertine*, spoke of the so-called critics as:

> Those picaroons in wit, wh' infest this road,
> And snap both friend and foe that come abroad.
> This savage party crueller appears
> Than in the Channel Ostend privateers.
> You in this road, or sink or plunder all,
> Remorseless as a storm on us you fall.

Otway, in a similar address written a year or two later, complained that new plays were more rudely handled than bears on the Bankside, and pleaded for the exercise, at least, of Bankside law—fair play. Wycherley, in introducing *The Plain Dealer* to the Theatre Royal audience in December, 1676, caustically pointed out that dog was most unnaturally eating dog, since authors were proving the greatest menace to their kind, and, though cordially hating each other, banded together to damn each others' plays. Factions of this type, he went on to say, were being aided and abetted by the noisy foplings in the pit, who, while depending upon new dramatic pabulum for their store of wit, insensately set about destroying the supply. Little, however, did Wycherley think that when carefully framing this very play he was actually suggesting to the malicious and mischievous whose conduct he so execrated a new weapon of offence, or rather one should say an instrument of exquisite torture, such, indeed, as was to be applied to dramatists and players for a cool century on end. It will be recalled that in the third act of the comedy that boisterously amusing hobble-de-hoy, Jerry Blackacre, returns from a conducted tour of the booths of Westminster Hall with a variety of ear-splitting toys on which he proceeds to give imitations of the cries of animals and the calls of birds. Among the contraptions to which he applied his lungs was a cat-call, most fatal introduction, since its shrill sounding undoubtedly suggested to the wanton-minded the most effective way in which the hopes of aspiring dramatists could be dashed.

History, in its bustling over many matters of much less importance, has omitted to record who was the first author upon whom fell the unhappy distinction of having his work destroyed in the new way. Though it is pretty certain that the sad event took place not many moons after the production of *The Plain Dealer*, it is not until 1686 that we encounter any references to indulgement in cat-calling; but it is important to note that one of these references admits of the conclusion that the silly practice had then been at least eight years in vogue. Apart from that, there is, in the first instance, potent significance in the fact that, prefixed to Tom D'Urfey's *The Banditti, or a Lady's Distress*, as published in 1686, is a rambling dedication to "the extreme witty and ludicrous gent, Sir Criticall Cat-Call," since the creation of such a title implies considerable familiarity on the part of playgoers with the gent's doings. In 1686, also, was produced, at Dorset Garden, Jevon the comedian's famous farce, *The Devil of a Wife*, in the prologue to which, after the speaker had asked how long it was since the town had seen a new play, it was avowed that "Union and cat-calls have quite spoil'd the stage": a reference to the fact that after the union of the two companies in 1682 few new plays had been produced and hardly any with success. More important still is it to note that Jevon, in the epistle dedicatory of his play, addressed "to my worthy friends and patrons at Locket's Ordinary," indulges in some cryptic reminiscences which, once we conceive what he is striving to convey, fairly well approximate the period when playhouse caterwauling first began:

> You may please to call to mind, and will remember that presently after our *Catcall Dissolution*, which for some time, from our natural Home and Provident Stage, dispers'd abroad us under-acting *Jews*, without a Moses to provide our *Manna:* and after the Players (as you may guess) of the many murmuring Hirelings, for those whose whistly breath blew 'em to a more remote and far worse climate; 'twas then the needful I (by dint of hunger forc'd) wrote

(you know full well) such powerful lines to your unmindful Senate that had ye not all had Hearts of Stone, you would have melted into retaliating Favours.

The allusions here are to the discords and dissensions which occurred at the Theatre Royal in 1678, culminating in the closing of the house for a considerable time and the departure of most of the minor players for Edinburgh.

Plays of old were damned for a variety of reasons as well as for no reason whatever, but perhaps the oddest way in which failure was reached was that which brought about the premature downfall of Higden's comedy, *The Wary Widow*, when produced at Drury Lane in 1693. In his preface to the play the humiliated author necessarily shirked telling the whole truth, and merely pointed out that " the murmuring Israelites " and " pagans of the Pit " had completely flabbergasted the players by their " hissing, mimicking, ridiculing and cat-calling." But what really happened was that there chanced to be an excessive number of drinking scenes in the first half of the play, and, real punch being freely supplied, the players soon began to feel the effects of their potations, got muddled, forgot their lines and made a sorry exhibition of themselves. This evoked so great a clamour that the curtain had to be let down for good at the end of the third act. Hard luck this, for *The Wary Widow* was really a good play.

Nor was it for the silencing of new plays alone that cat-calling was brought into force. Undesired revivals were similarly burked, one of the most noteworthy instances of this having occurred at Drury Lane early in 1712, when an attempt was made to re-establish Beaumont and Fletcher's *The Humorous Lieutenant* in the repertory. It was doubtless to this turning down of the thumb that Addison referred in his delightfully whimsical essay on Cat-calling, published not long after in the *Spectator*, when, after expressing his belief that the cat-call was distinctively an English device and maintaining that its special theatrical use was " peculiar to our nation," he goes on to say :

> It has at least received great improvements among us, whether we consider the instrument itself, or those several quavers and graces which are thrown into the playing of it. Every one might be sensible of this, who heard that remarkable overgrown cat-call which was placed in the center of the pit, and presided over all the rest at that celebrated performance lately exhibited in *Drury Lane*.

If Addison was right in his assertion that cat-calling was then unknown outside the English theatre, we have no option but to assume that the noxious practice was carried over into France at a slightly later period. In M. Jusserand's *Shakespeare in France* one finds reproduced in black and white a late eighteenth-century colour print entitled *L'auteur siffle* in which an exasperated playwright is shown striding furiously across the front of the stage after the slaughter of his play, and tearing up his manuscript as he goes. Volleying from six cat-calls is being directed towards him from the parterre, and a seventh malcontent is whistling vigorously on a door-key.

Meanwhile, in England, the players had stoically eaten the leek. Cat-calling had come to be looked upon as inevitable. Few authors faced the possibilities with equanimity, but the Leviathan—as contemptuous of the crowd as his Elizabethan namesake—was among the number. Do we not find him writing of himself in the prologue to *Irene* in 1749 :

> Be this at least his praise ; be this his pride :
> To force applause no modern arts are try'd.
> Should partial cat-calls all his hopes confound,
> He bids no trumpet quell the fatal sound.

To us, however, it is a pitiable spectacle to see many of the authors hugging their chains. When Edward Moore's comedy, *Gil Blas*, was produced at Drury Lane in 1751, Garrick provided for it a prologue to be spoken by Woodward in the character of a critic with a cat-call in his hand. It began by asking :

> Are you all ready ? Here's your music ! here ! (blows cat-call)
> Author sneak off, we'll tickle you, my dear.

Was there ever such a tempting of providence ! Of a surety, it is not surprising that, under such urging, the audience treated the unfortunate author to so much titillation that his play was never heard of after.

A score of years passed without bringing any serious betterment of the conditions. Authors continued to joke over their servility. Said the prologue to Kelly's *A Word to the Wise*, when that ill-fated comedy was produced at old Drury in 1770 :

> A roasted poet is a glorious meal—
> And oft I've known a miserable wit,
> Through downright laughter fasten'd on the spit,
> Basted with cat-call sauce for very fun,
> Not till quite ready—but till quite undone.

About the last time the cat-call was ever heard in an English theatre was at Covent Garden late in 1809 during the prolonged O.P. riots. Perhaps the main reason why it then fell into desuetude was that it proved a very mild weapon of offence compared with most of those which the rioters brought into play. We read that, night after night, watchmen's rattles, dustmen's bells, and French horns and bugles were regularly resorted to with the aim of preventing the performance from being heard. It is even said that now and again a party of three or four pleasant fellows brought live pigs into the pit, and, when a lull came in the storm, stirred things up by pinching them vigorously.

W. J. LAWRENCE.

FURTWÄNGLER AND KLEMPERER

WE have had two excellent conductors from abroad visiting us last week, Furtwängler, who brought his own orchestra, the famous Berlin Philharmonic, and Klemperer, who conducted the London Symphony Orchestra, at the two Courtauld-Sargent concerts. As both these musicians enjoy the highest reputation on the Continent it was an interesting opportunity for our English musicians and amateurs to hear their performances and observe their methods.

Comparisons are odious if made in a competitive spirit, but if used honestly for illustration they can be enlightening, and any comparison I make will be made in that spirit. A conductor may have great gifts and yet not be endowed with the capacity to train an orchestra and perfect it into a highly skilled and responsive instrument. I would emphasise the word " instrument " because there has been an attempt by prejudiced persons to prejudge the performance of any highly efficient orchestra by calling it a " machine." Now, whatever the defects of the Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra—and I can see few, if any—it is not a machine but a highly sensitive and musicianly instrument, and to Furtwängler must be given the credit for having trained and brought the Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra to its present pitch of perfection. I am informed that, in the opinion of those who were familiar with it in the days of Nikisch, it was by no means so fine an instrument as it is to-day. And this is much to the point because it illustrates my statement that a musician may be most highly gifted as a conductor (which Nikisch was) and yet not be fitted for the task of training and perfecting an orchestra.

I heard Furtwängler's three concerts at the Queen's Hall, devoted to Schubert, Brahms and Beethoven respectively. At the Schubert concert the impression made by the wonderful ensemble playing of the orchestra and the way all the individual musicians were keenly alive to their parts, in the whole, aiding and perfecting one another, was so great that there was nothing to do but surrender oneself to a full enjoyment of the music, which flowed with unfailing rhythm and precision under the conductor's direction. At the second, the Brahms concert, the impression was not so completely convincing. The concert began with Brahms' Haydn

Variations, and one became conscious of a certain over-refinement of tone gradation and of rhythm which detracted from the virtue of the music. In the Brahms C Minor symphony, however, these defects were not apparent and the performance was full of vitality and thoroughly satisfying. It was not really until the Beethoven Concert that certain limitations in Furtwängler's nature as a musician seemed—to me, at least—to become sufficiently marked to affect the performances. The "Pastoral" symphony is not one of the most popular with conductors; perhaps this is because it needs rarer qualities in a conductor to effect a satisfactory rendering than more dramatic works such as the Brahms C Minor symphony. It provides two especially hard tests, the first is the beautiful slow movement, and the second is the finale, and it perhaps throws some light on Furtwängler's musical nature that in neither of these movements, but only in the "storm" section was his rendering satisfactory. We know that Beethoven did not intend his "Pastoral" symphony to be taken as descriptive music. It was an expression of mood in the presence of nature, not a description of natural phenomena. Now Beethoven's mood, it seems to me, is essentially direct and, in a certain sense, naive—that is, naive as only genius can be naive: with a simplicity that is greater even than the simplicity of childhood. But this mood was completely lacking in Furtwängler's rendering and, therefore, the whole essence of this music was lost. We were not taken into the freshness and profound sympathy of nature, but into a closed room where there were but painted simulacra of flowers and a canvas brook. Similarly, in the finale, instead of encountering a pure elemental joy and pantheistic hymn of praise, we were taken into the sophisticated atmosphere of a religious fane; and this all proceeded technically by over-refinement and sophistication from an inadequate or, I would rather say, indirect and distorted conception by Furtwängler of this music.

I am criticising Furtwängler from the highest possible standard I can conceive and it would be ridiculous to apply such criticism to a conductor of inferior quality. When we come to consider the work of musicians of the calibre of Furtwängler and Klemperer, than whom no conductor's reputation stands higher among discerning and serious musicians abroad—not even Toscanini's—it is necessary to make this quite clear. Klemperer had no such advantage as Furtwängler in conducting his own trained orchestra. He had, at the Courtauld-Sargent concert, the London Symphony Orchestra, which is not even our best orchestra. But I consider that Klemperer's performance with the L. S. O. of two works totally new to the L. S. O. namely, Hindemith's Concert Music for Piano, Harps and Brass, and Bruckner's Seventh Symphony, was even more impressive than Furtwängler's performances with the Berlin Philharmonic. Both are ungrateful pieces for conductors to put before an English audience. The Hindemith work has the interest of novelty, and few of us find it easy to separate what is merely novel and ephemeral from what is of essential musical value in this work. I was held interested throughout, but I did not receive a definite enough impression from this one performance to be able to give my real opinion of the work. I can only say that it has some expressive and attractive moments and that Hindemith is so individual and talented a composer that one must listen to his compositions with respect.

Bruckner has a reputation in Germany and Austria similar to the reputation Elgar has here, but he has held it longer. He was a contemporary of Wagner's as a young man, but Wagner's influence on his music has been exaggerated. What struck me even more forcibly on hearing this symphony than when I heard his eighth symphony some time ago was his surprising individuality and freedom from the influence of his contemporaries. Bruckner has a very personal and individual utterance, but it is, I fear, masked for too many of our contemporary musicians by the presence of formal defects which every music student can point to. It is easy to say that his music sounds too much like improvising, that he repeats everything at least four times and that one gets tired of these sequences and inversions. Those who stop there have ears, but they have ears chiefly for superficial things. A more serious deficiency for English audiences is Bruckner's lack of any sense of humour. It is in this that he chiefly resembles César Franck, who also shares his formal defects. No composer with a sense of humour would have written the gigantic, but quite humourless, Scherzo in this symphony. But those with musical instinct should recognise the rare and extraordinary quality of the first movement and the slow movement. Here there is real inspiration and quality of musical thought and expression that is on a far higher and remoter level than is ever attained by many composers of more effective and superficial formal abilities.

Klemperer's performances of the Bruckner and Hindemith works were musically of the highest quality, and only a musician could appreciate fully the work he must have put into the preparation of the Mozart "Prague" symphony to get from the L.S.O. so direct and pure a performance of this beautiful work. In this country many of our musicians prefer Mozart to be drenched with perfume. They persist in describing Mozart as eighteenth century, and we are told by historians that the saloon and boudoir of the eighteenth-century were drowned in scent to hide the smells of that insanitary age. But Mozart's music is not insanitary, and does not need nuances and this sentimentalisation. Personally, I rejoiced to hear Klemperer's clean, beautifully rhythmic and sensitive performance, and I consider Klemperer to be the most satisfying conductor I know of and wish we had the opportunity of hearing him also at Govent Garden, for it is as an opera conductor that he is famous throughout the Continent.

W. J. TURNER.

WESTFRONT AT THE OXFORD FILM SOCIETY

PERHAPS the last of the giant war-films was shown for the last time in England to the Oxford Film Society on February 7th. *Westfront* has appeared under considerable disadvantages. The pictorial frightfulnesses of hand-to-hand fighting, of exploding shells, of the sounds of bombardment and fusillade—all very nearly impossible to convey as actual experience knew them—have been repeated into a condition of worn conventions. The details of the trench or shell-hole zone, once so keenly felt and understood, are not now so fascinating to the mind; those who did not know them have no passion for their monotony when life offers so many tokens of fresher significance; those who did seek in vain in the films for much of what was dreadfully or humanely familiar. In *Westfront* there were, for example, none of those long columns of men on the march to the line passing the shrine at the end of the farthest unflattened village; none of those marvellous direction-boards or painted signs which helped to control all traffic behind the German line. I saw some of those persisting in Lille so late as last spring, and the effect on the memory was immediate and powerful; the eastward causeways "rang to the tramp of armèd men."

But why all the detail, even if it were complete and exact? Herr Pabst has created a prodigious abundance of battle-gear, of mad voices of battle as near the originals as have been contrived, of extremes of deadly violence; his great shells root up the ground with due fury, they become black demons of smoke such as made the horizon, or the next few yards, an ugly thought. The intense elaboration which has gone to the making of *Westfront*, governed by an impartial desire to represent war as the great and the soul-destroying illusion, cannot be considered without deep and admiring gratitude. The only question is whether the

facsimile method is the best, and the film itself suggests that it may not be; that episodes swiftly related with the front line, but away from it, are the strongest messengers of war's misery. Thus, the soldier returning on leave to his home, and discovering the unfaithfulness of his wife—a masterpiece of grim acting—is a far more poignant martyr than he was even in the craters, pitilessly shelled and besprawled with dead. And of the aspects of thunder and lightning of gunfire, and seething bomb-throwers, and waves of assaulting infantry in the entanglements, perhaps none is so shocking and so able to open chasms in our emotions as that brief jungle-struggle between the Turco and the charming student-in-arms. The idea and essence of the roaring general agony are not to be omitted; on them depends the force of the episodes; but they might be flashed into the sense more piercingly than by multiplied statements.

A certain simplicity characterises the headings supplied here and there for the English issue of *Westfront*. After the passion of the soldier rewarded for his sufferings by finding his wife in adultery, these words appear: "Was she really to blame?" They raised a laugh; but the laugh itself was a tribute to the quality of the whole work, and the subtle movements of mood depicted. It is also a triumph for the undergraduate founders of the still youthful Oxford Film Society to have given us at this time a war film, and one so memorable; but they will not rest on their laurels, and even *Westfront* is an item in their brilliant enterprise.

EDMUND BLUNDEN.

PLAYS AND PICTURES

O.U.D.S. "Romeo and Juliet"

THE chief interest of the Oxford University Dramatic Society's performances of *Romeo and Juliet* this week lay in Mr. John Gielgud's production and in seeing whether Oxford could produce a Romeo. With Mr. Gielgud the Society proved to have been in safe hands; he led it away from such experimental paths as those trodden in recent years under the guidance of M. Komisarjevsky, but his production was exciting throughout and had moments of great beauty. The device of having three slender-pillared arches across the stage, each of which could be used as a separate scene, enabled the play to proceed smoothly and speedily with but one interval. The chief defect of a production which emphasised the poetic rather than the dramatic qualities of the play was that it did not help the actors during the more difficult passages of the last two acts. In appearance, Mr. C. V. Hassell (Wadham) was almost an ideal Romeo, and he has a finely expressive voice. He acted rather too gently; but his performance was consistent. He was, indeed, only excelled among other members of the Society by Mr. G. A. C. Devine (Wadham), who stood out from the other undergraduate members of the cast, by the success with which he combined the subtlety and violence of Mercutio's character. A totally unrecognisable Miss Edith Evans made a superb Nurse; every gesture and intonation had a firm and defined significance. Miss Peggy Ashcroft's Juliet was a far better achievement than her Desdemona; in joy and in grief her Juliet was something more than merely the heroine of a tragic legend—she was unforgettably flesh and blood. The only disadvantage of two performances such as those of Miss Evans and Miss Ashcroft is that it makes it more difficult to assess fairly the merit of the amateurs who act with them; that the latter did not wilt entirely in the comparison is as much a tribute to the O.U.D.S. as to its guests.

"Jaurez and Maximilian"

The Stage Society's third production this season was an English version by Ruth Langner of Franz Werfel's drama on the unhappy reign of Maximilian of Austria in Mexico. The years covered were too rich in incident to be embodied in one play, even though the dramatist, sooner than sacrifice anything, decides to use the episodic form. Herr Werfel unfortunately has not the secret of this method: he becomes distracted, and fails in the effort to drive home one dramatic incident or line of thought, so showing it in all its bearings and from every angle. The play had moments of beauty, but the constant break in scene killed interest in the story and made the whole lifeless and dull. Mr. Wilfrid Walter gave a good performance as the Emperor, and there were clever sketches by Mr. Cecil Trouncer and Mr. Roy Graham. Mr. John Fernald's production was thoughtful, but should have been speeded up.

Our Sinful Elders

The Guilty Generation (the older generation, for once—that sinful generation which came to pubescence under Roosevelt) is another good gangster film, rather spoilt, I felt, by the moral uplift, which informs the whole production. Two young virgins, a speakeasy Romeo and Juliet, are horrified to learn the alcoholic profession of their respective fathers. And well they might be horrified, as more and closer relations are inevitably "bumped off," till finally the main father-villain, in an endeavour to "bump off" his son-in-law, is anticipated by his own golden-hearted Italian mother and falls dead across the screen. *The Guilty Generation* suffers, perhaps, from being a trifle too classical in construction, murder after murder being announced chillily over the telephone, that twentieth-century version of an Aeschylean messenger. Still, the story is well told, and we have a new type of racketeer, an immensely silent Italian, who moves with steely moderation towards his prey. His life's ambition—a normal one, it appears, with gangsters—is social success, and in a very good scene we are shown his own son smashing up his party. It is a bitter moment, for the drink racketeer has a morbid hatred of drunkenness. I am inclined to think that the intellectual content of this film is superior to its pictorial realisation. No doubt, it would be awful for a clean young man, who had enjoyed all the advantages of a sheltered education in Paris, to find that his father was a gangster. But the spectacle of his turning on his parent is at once *outré* and rather boring. In film-land at any rate, the gangster must be cock of his own walk. Nothing but praise, however, can be awarded to Mr. Carillo, the chief racketeer, who attained a really sinister result with great economy of means. Had *The Guilty Generation* talked a little less, it would have been a first-rate "talkie."

Things to see and hear in the coming week:

Friday, February 12th—
Busch and Serkin, Wigmore Hall, 8.30.
Roger Fry on "French Art," Queen's Hall, 8.

Saturday, February 13th—
Busch Quartet, Wigmore Hall, 3.

Sunday, February 14th—
Kreisler, Albert Hall, 3.
Revival "Blue Express," Academy Cinema.

Monday, February 15th—
Busch Quartet and Serkin, Wigmore Hall, 8.30.

Tuesday, February 16th—
Haydn Recital, Léner Quartet, Queen's Hall, 8.15.
J. E. Barton on "Modern Art," B.B.C., 8.30.
"Le Viol de Lucrèce," New Theatre.

Wednesday, February 17th—
Busch Quartet, Wigmore Hall, 8.30.
Francis Birrell on "The Cinema," B.B.C., 6.50.
Sir William Beveridge on "Changes in Family Life," B.B.C., 7.30.
"King, Queen and Knave," Playhouse Theatre.

Current Literature

BOOKS IN GENERAL

I HAVE had a splendid time reading the most depressing book I have met for years—Mr. F. L. Allen's *Only Yesterday* (Hamish Hamilton, 12s. 6d.). In case that sentence is misleading I must say that *Only Yesterday* is one of the most entertaining, lively, well-informed and sensible books I have read lately; the depressing quality resides not in the book, but in the subject which is, by and large, the sheep-like quality of the inhabitants of the United States of America as evidenced by their behaviour in the years 1920 to 1930. I am one of the few journalists who habitually defend America. Brought up as a child on American magazines, accustomed by Radical relatives to hear America spoken of as the Radical's natural home and national expression, I can still recognise, even when angry European Radicals declaim about Mooney or Sacco and Vanzetti, that the agitation against injustice in those cases, and in hundreds of others, was started by Americans, financed by Americans, carried on by Americans, and broadcast through the world by Americans. If Secretary Palmer, and Calvin Coolidge and President Lowell are Americans, so are Upton Sinclair, Jane Addams, Edna St. Vincent Millay, Susan Glaspell and Sinclair Lewis. Any criticism made on America by foreigners has nearly always been made first by Americans; and I doubt if that could be said so confidently of many countries in Europe.

* * *

Still, *Only Yesterday* is depressing. Carefully, but with humour and a pleasantly restrained irony, Mr. Allen shows how far his countrymen went in making fools of themselves between the end of the war and 1930. Only quotation can do justice to his case.

> There were frantic efforts to stay the tide of moral change by law, the most picturesque of these efforts being the ordinance actually passed in Norphelt, Arkansas, in 1925, which contained the following provisions:
>
> "Section 1. Hereafter it shall be unlawful for any man and woman, male or female, to be guilty of committing the act of sexual intercourse between themselves at any place within the corporate limits of the said town.
>
> "Section 3. Section One of this ordinance shall not apply to married persons as between themselves, and their husband and wife, unless of a grossly improper or lascivious nature."

If the morals of the people of Norphelt are as licentious as their legislators' grammar, one can understand the need for some kind of legal restriction; but it still seems incredible that any body of men could draw up such sentences. One of Mr. Allen's chapters describes the huge gambles on the New York Exchange, when men bought stocks at a figure that yielded about two per cent. Another is devoted to the zest of the drummer. Here is a tale of smart salesmanship.

> *Selling News* awarded one of its cash prizes for "sales ideas" to a vendor of electric cleaners who told the following story of commercial prowess. One day he looked up from the street and saw a lady shaking a rug out of a second-storey window. "The door leading to her upstairs room was open. I went right in and up the stairs without knocking, greeting the lady with the remark: 'Well, I am here right on time. What room do you wish me to start in?' She was very much surprised, assuring me that I had the wrong number. But during my very courteous apologies I had managed to get my cleaner connected and in action. The result was that I walked out minus the cleaner, plus her contract and check for a substantial down payment." The readers of *Selling News* were apparently not expected to be less than enthusiastic at the prospect of a man invading a woman's apartment and setting up a cleaner in it without permission, and under false pretences. For if you could get away with such exploits, it helped business, and good business helped prosperity, and prosperity was good for the country.

"During my very courteous apologies——!" No wonder it was necessary to invent the device of taking people for a ride, and the trick of bumping off, but it was too often the wrong persons who went on those enforced journeys.

After his chapter on the Red Scare Mr. Allen deals with the revolution in morals: during the decade under discussion it may be said, without gross injustice, that a certain section of American girlhood passed from a belief that smoking and "one-piece" bathing costumes were terribly immoral to a conviction that there was no harm in drunkenness and fornication. No doubt modern novelists and satirists have exaggerated the extent of this change. It probably only affects a comparatively small percentage of the population. Mr. Allen is cautious, but I gather that he thinks that such a book as Scott Fitzgerald's *This Side of Paradise*, published in 1920, actually produced, in wider and less sophisticated circles, something of the habits that it portrayed as customary in a small over-civilised clique.

> One of the most striking results of the revolution was a widely pervasive obsession with sex. To listen to the conversation of some of the sons and daughters of Mr. and Mrs. Grundy was to be reminded of the girl whose father said that she would talk about anything; in fact, she hardly ever talked about anything else.

That is now changing. The subject of sex, even when served with psycho-analytic sauce, has produced the inevitable boredom.

> LaMarr Warrick, who taught at a large Middle Western University, reported in *Harper's* in the autumn of 1930 that the biological novels of Aldous Huxley, the biological psychology of John B. Watson, and the biological philosophies of Bertrand Russell were "fast becoming . .·. out of date" among the students in her classes. She found the new, younger generation tiring of what one of these students called "a modernism which leaves you washed out and cynical and thirsty." A staff reporter for the *Des Moines Sunday Register* queried professors and undergraduates at three colleges in Iowa as to the validity of Mrs. Warrick's contentions, and an impressive majority of those with whom he talked told him that what she had said held true in Iowa as well as in Illinois.

* * *

What is depressing, whether Mr. Allen reports good things or bad, is that he gives very little reason, whatever subject he is discussing—and he travels from Teapot Dome and Dayton to Browning's "Peaches" and Aimée MacPherson—to believe that the changes he records in public opinion are due to anything but fashion, the desire for uniformity, the lust for the control and the conquest of the eccentric. It is, I think, certain that a disastrous inclination was given to American practical morality by the wide spread of Methodism through the continent. It is due to Methodism rather than to anything else that America, more than other countries, is full of people who confuse minor vices or even merely self-indulgent habits with grave anti-social offences. It was the characteristic of early Methodism to denounce as grievous sins actions which a saner Christianity disallowed only for those who voluntarily put themselves under the discipline of the religious life. Smoking, wine-drinking, card-playing, theatre-going—all these harmless indulgences or amusements have been, and in some circles still are, regarded with horrified disapprobation, or denounced as sins. No normal person can, except under the impulse of religious fanaticism, continually accede to such a creed: and so the agreement of most becomes a mere hypocritical fashion. So when the young girl finds the fashion changing, she will fly to the fashion that supervenes—not from any intellectual conviction, often not from any desire or expectation of pleasure, but simply because she has a hatred of being thought odd. That is why I find *Only Yesterday* depressing. As Mr. Allen passes craze after craze in review, scanning with a considerate and shrewd eye human folly and human cruelty, he can record changes for the better—changes in the direction of truth and sincerity instead of a mere callous candour, in the direction of genuine self-criticism instead of a mere reaction to the "blues"; but I can find small indication in his pages that he believes that this change is based, to any considerable extent, on a firm intellectual foundation.

RICHARD SUNNE.

NEW NOVELS

For the Delight of Antonio. By BEATRICE CURTIS BROWN. Macmillan. 7s. 6d.

Westward Passage. By MARGARET AYER BARNES. Cape. 7s. 6d.

Voyage Declined. By MICHAEL ROMAIN. Grayson and Grayson. 7s. 6d.

Straw-Feet. By JOHN BRANDANE. Constable. 7s. 6d.

The Forlorn Years. By JOHN MORRISON. Collins. 7s. 6d.

For the Delight of Antonio is the best of these books. But though "best" is a word that always has to sound well, it requires a little further looking into. Miss Curtis Brown's victory is, it must be confessed, a lucky one—a little like winning one's match through the disqualification of the other side. And yet this book is not merely good enough to be best among the indifferent—it could even occupy quite a respectable last place among important writers. Its author writes objectively, with detachment, and with reverence and care for the art of writing; and, above all, the version of life that she presents has a genuinely gallant and heroic sound. Richard Campion is an English student in Italy in the last century. He becomes involved in an attempt to save the ancient family and Villa of Vareni from the disaster threatened by the participation of the young heir, Antonio, in a distant political revolt. Richard's journey to Florence, where he is to warn Antonio of the danger his family are in by his escapade, is a true epic of adventures of mind and body, culminating in that adventure, belonging equally to both, of his sentence to death.

> He did not know what to do, how to think. He had always lived, thought, moved, spoken for the future; with nothing but *now*, nothing but the actual present remaining with him, he ceased to be a person at all; he had no substance. Everything he had done had always gone to make up some Richard Campion of to-morrow. . . . Fear ran up and down his flesh and turned his blood to water. For suddenly he thought: "What is the use of *thinking?* Every thought is still-born now that it can never be brought to birth in character or action, can never be repeated, is no longer experience for it casts no shadow before it. . . ." He was being horribly divorced from that lifelong companion, his adult self. Walking ahead up the mountain he had seen the himself of the future ever beckoning to him, distant yet inseparable from him. That distant companion was the man they had killed, were killing to-morrow. Himself alone they could never kill, for without that companion he had never lived. He alone was nothing.

It will be seen from this quotation that this is at any rate thoughtful if not imaginative writing. And the development of the story, in which the young heir's escapade proves to be a life and death struggle in which even the sceptical Richard, escaped from execution, is drawn to participate, is treated with careful differentiation of character and motives. The trouble is that the story is good enough to have been better—just as the descriptive writing is good enough to make one sure one can quote a really perfect example of Italian landscape, without ever being able quite to find it. Miss Curtis Brown fell in love with her story and her setting a few moments too soon. She had observed them with considerable effect, but she should have taken stock of them a little longer and more exactingly before glamour wrote "perfect" upon them.

The rest of these books have to be read by the literary reader not as he reads, but as he might chat with the paper-boy, or do a little shopping, or glance up the street to see if his neighbour has gone to post a letter. Though they happen to be print and paper, their connection is not with the reading-world so much as with the trivial incidents that can half-catch the attention for a moment, the idle little curiosities about other people's affairs that might keep one lingering and watching at the window. A reader's adventures in thought or style or invention are quite out of the question. You will read idly just to know what small things happen—for if your eye is caught by the sight of a man running for an omnibus, you probably watch to see if he gets it.

Mrs. Barnes, an American writer, has taken the subject ready to her hand. A woman who has left one husband to marry another meets the first one again, after ten years, on an ocean liner. Since the days of their bickering, struggling married life Nick has become a famous novelist; and as Olivia's second husband has proved dull, she falls in love with the original one again, and he with her. Ordinary romance is, of course, tame in comparison with such suggestive affairs. Consider the piquancy of the situations. Olivia has on board with her the daughter of this first marriage: how introduce her, before a watchful company, to her attractive father?—my daughter? your daughter? our daughter? Which is the proper form? Fascinating imbroglio! And how intriguing that Olivia, during a dance on board, should have her prayer for caution in love-making silenced by Nick's facetious: "I still think the eyes of an innocent young girl can rest without outrage on the spectacle of her father and her mother waltzing together." The progress of the affair is told in seven chapters, beginning with "Tuesday," the first day out, and so on, till the end on "Monday," two days after landing. I am afraid I found it a long week. Mrs. Barnes, it is true, tries to give some temperamental flavour to her situation by showing Nick and Olivia, as soon as they have decided to become reunited, irresistibly resume their old quarrelling and dissatisfaction; so that, just in time, Olivia falls back into the dull devoted arms of the reigning husband. But there is not enough character among them all to put life into a little finger: there is only the piquancy, the sheer romance and rapture, of divorce.

Voyage Declined is written entirely about the outside of things. "Don't look at me. I'm still natural," says Ruth when her lover arrives too early in the morning; but if one gets for a moment underneath the make-up one certainly never gets beneath her skin. Mr. Romain is apt to think that he has captured as much of his characters' secret souls as is necessary when he has explained their circumstances in life. Their behaviour responds automatically to their incomes. Two-pounds-ten a week describes the heroine; she is also a good-looking girl in a dressmaking establishment; but two-pounds-ten and clothes and cocktails are in the place of her will and her flesh and blood. The men she is concerned with are faint effigies attached to good bank balances; and a good bank balance, it is clear, is a cynical and unprincipled fellow to have to do with. The fact that Mr. Romain has thought himself to be giving a disinterested exposition of modern life partly justifies the characters' doing nothing but what that modern life most easily suggests to them. The cold, hard characters and events may not be inaccurate. But you will not find that degree of accuracy

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which is an art in itself—even though you might just conceivably crane your neck to see what's happening.

Straw-Feet is a well-intentioned, unsophisticated tale with a Highland doctor for its hero. The account of Macleod's scattered Island-practice, his war experiences, his romances of an unsurpassable mildness (beginning with his painful flush when his aged mother suggests he may one day marry) will occasionally require the reader's patience; and an odd character who is a mixture of tramp and scholar and German spy will require his credulity. David Lorne in *The Forlorn Years* is another Scotch hero. It is a pleasant ingenuous tale, with its familiar quota of infancy and school-days; not much more than an allusion to the War; a clerkship in an office and a little authorship; loss of work and ensuing hunger, and salvation at the hands of a prostitute; then more authorship. A promising romance is destroyed by rumours of the innocent prostitute episode. No life here, nor literature—only the fact that a little movement has caught one's eye.

VIOLA MEYNELL.

THE FRIEND OF GENIUS

Edward Clodd, a Memoir. By JOSEPH MCCABE. Lane. 6s.

When I took leave of the old *Daily Chronicle* at the end of 1903, the contributors to the Literary Page, which I had edited for six years whenever I was not out at wars or rebellions, assembled to say farewell. There were about twenty of them, all distinguished men and women, and Edward Clodd was certainly among the most distinguished and valuable. For he wrote with authority upon all subjects connected with evolution, anthropology, and folk-lore. Yet, when I spoke in gratitude for the services of each of my colleagues in turn, I did not refer to his scientific writings, but simply described him as "the friend of genius and the genius of friendship." It is as such that he will always remain in my memory. With his scientific researches I had no connection, for I hardly knew what even "totem" or "atavism" meant till he explained them. But from the first until his death two years ago, I always regarded him as the genius of friendship.

Friendship radiated from his presence. I felt it directly I saw him waiting for my arrival at the Aldeburgh station. All his guests felt it as they gathered in his familiar house, built by his sailor father looking over the brown North Sea, and showing something of a sailing ship in its design. There from time to time, at the holidays of Easter, Whitsun, and August, I used to meet nearly all the leading men in science, exploration, and history, besides some of the most eminent in imaginative literature. Why were they always glad to accept the invitation of one who, after all, was but a bank clerk throughout his working life, and had nothing to offer in the way of entertainment except a comfortable house, walks through dullish country, and sailing up and down a tidal river in a boat that had to be helped along with oars till she fell "nail-sick" and was supplanted by a trim little cutter that could make against the heavy tide?

It is true that Clodd himself was endowed with an accurately scientific and rational mind, was a tremendous reader on the highest subjects, and had written some books on scientific history that gained a large circulation, being welcomed with enthusiasm by the increasing numbers of people to whom the scientific theories of man's origin and growth brought the excitement and stimulus of revolutionary adventure. But the men who came to be with him, such as James Frazer, Professor Haddon, H. E. Armstrong, Alfred Lyall, Grant Allen, Cotter Morison, Elliot Smith, Herbert Spencer, E. B. Tylor, Henry Thompson, "Amazon" Bates, Frederick Pollock, James Cotton, Samuel Butler, Holman Hunt, and Hugh Clifford, to say nothing of George Meredith and Thomas Hardy, were all men of the highest standing in their special realms of science, speculation, law or art. I could mention many more, for, indeed, Mr. McCabe's chief difficulty in composing his admirable sketch of Clodd's life has been to avoid making it a mere list of Clodd's celebrated friends. What was it drew them, making him, as someone said, the magnetic pole of friendship?

Of course, there was, first, Clodd's accurate knowledge and breadth of interest in almost every form of thought. I never met a theologian or politician in his house, and I cannot say what would have happened to a spiritualist who had been precipitated there by some medium's mistake; but, except for spiritualism, he was interested or tolerant of all opinions. Genuine interest or polite tolerance certainly went far, but I think the true cause of success at these gatherings was Clodd's own modesty. He never interrupted or contradicted, and he never volunteered information. "I serve" seemed to be his motto, and he appeared to be always engaged in serving the comfort and taste of each guest with exact discernment. With a smiling or grave geniality he would follow the general conversation until, in later years, his deafness increased so that one had to address him separately.

Mr. McCabe says that the harmony was only once interrupted, and that is true, but how often was I restrained only by the geniality of Clodd himself from some volcanic explosion in opposition to some other guest! No doubt we often felt the need of that restraint, and on one occasion a scientific man of singular equanimity, walking with me along the shore, poured out his dislike of one who was possessed by "vulgarity in the soul." Yet indoors the harmony was never broken.

In his later years Clodd lost something of his cheerfulness and ready humour. The hopes of "meliorism" raised in the middle of last century by the advanced thinkers who had influenced him most appeared to be dashed by the frequent wars, especially by the Great War, which he said to me had rubbed the smile off life. He had loved life passionately, not so much for its pleasures as for its interest and hope. "I am a glutton for life," he used to say, and now he perceived the elements of ancient barbarism and superstition again prevailing. In the midst of bloodshed, injustice, mysticism, and, worst of all, spiritualism, how could the fervid hopes of progress persist? Most of his earlier friends had gone, some had even turned from the narrow path of reason. Before his ninetieth year, his hearing, sight, and at times even his speech almost left him. Perhaps he should have died when his powers were full and his name better known. But, after all, Mr. Joseph McCabe has here given us a record of a very remarkable character and life.

Clodd's library was extensive and valuable. So was his correspondence. Some of the books and letters are now in Leeds University as a "Clodd Collection." Most of the remainder are, I believe, still in his house as he left it. He was anxious they should be kept together, as they might be in the Leeds Collection, or in charge of the Rationalist Press Association, of which he was at one time President.

HENRY W. NEVINSON.

AN ANATOMY OF WAR

They That Take the Sword. By ESMÉ WINGFIELD-STRATFORD. Routledge. 12s. 6d.

Marching backwards is a puzzling habit of the times. To an extra-planetary observer the civilised world would present the spectacle of certain agglomerations of human beings engaged in apparently lunatic motion. The great majority of individuals in each of these groups have their faces—indeed their hearts—turned toward a light, and yet, encouraged by the fervent cries of their leaders, their feet are busily engaged in removing them towards darkness and chaos. What is the meaning of these insane manœuvres, the detached observer would ask, after being informed that these are the honourable exercises of Sovereign States. *Who* wants to move backwards, the masses, or their leaders, or both, or neither? And if nobody has this desire, what is the mechanism that drives them? The analysis of this phenomenon evidently demands an attack as bold and quick as the wits of social historians can devise. Dr. Wingfield-Stratford's book is a fine and in the main a successful attempt to diagnose this madness in our social legs. If the printing press were idle for a month, during which the population of Europe could be persuaded to study this anatomy of war, it is conceivable that we might presently be moving where we are looking. Dr. Wingfield-Stratford has managed to tap Sir Norman Angell's most powerful unseen assassin on the shoulder.

The strange adventures of the author may be indicated by mentioning some of the things he searches diligently for and fails to find—a homicidal bludgeon in the cave of primitive man; intelligence in the mind of the professional soldier; genius in the records of the great conquerors; common sense in the empire builder; honour, glory or chivalry in modern warfare. He says that the Imperialist is as crassly silly as the engineer who goes on extending a bridge by lengthening the span of the arches. He finds that a religious sense is the most potent bulwark against the destructive energy of conquest and marks how the anarchy

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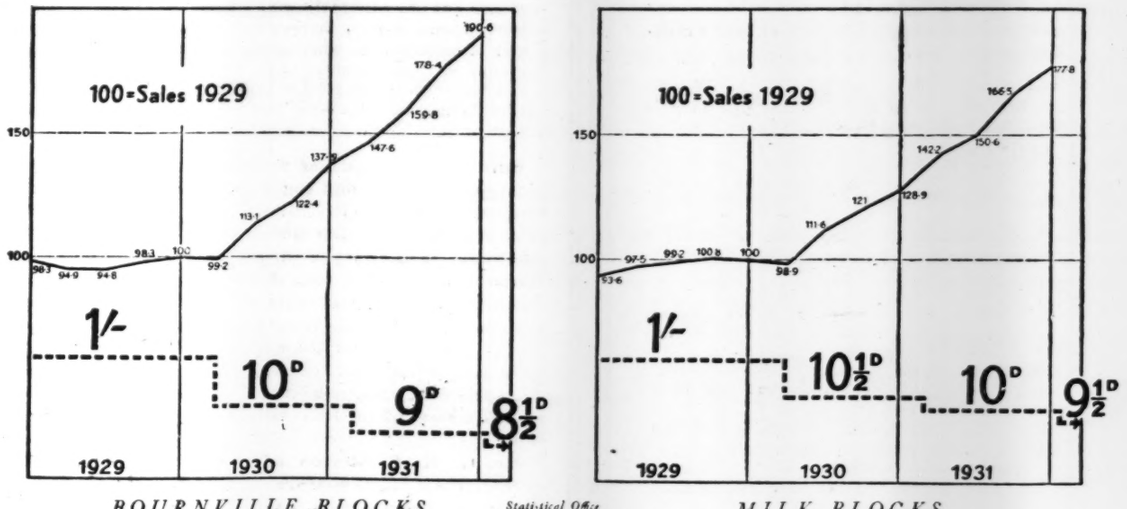

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of nationalism began in Europe when the Holy Roman Empire failed to hold it together. As for physical science, its triumphs in a century of overweening nationalism were about as much of a blessing as would be the presentation of loaded revolvers to a nurseryful of fractious children. And when, as was inevitable, the nursery blew up in 1914, it only required the utter incapacity of military commanders to work their new-fangled machine, to convert the vaunted art of war into a shambles of mud and blood.

Dr. Wingfield-Stratford, it will be seen, has many of the arts of the pamphleteer. War, however, is not to be despatched by execration, ridicule, or any device of the guerilla. This work is notable because history is raided in order to construct a firm historical argument. The author advances through a series of simple, related propositions:

1. Man is not descended from a warlike animal.
2. Civilisation is the balance of man's creative over his destructive energy.
3. War, the generator of destructive energy, is a disease of civilisation.
4. To build takes longer than to destroy.
5. As civilisation grows more elaborate it grows more interdependent and therefore vulnerable.
6. Physical science has increased man's power without refining his desires.
7. The equilibrium between vulnerability and potential destructive power approaches a critical instability.
8. Man has violently changed his environment. Unless he adapts himself, extinction will follow.

One difficulty in writing of this kind is to find words sharp and vivid enough to pierce minds dulled with the din of political rhetoric and bemused by mass suggestion. Some of the above propositions are almost self evident, but they only come alive if one makes an effort to grasp their implications. And in expounding those which are arguable, the author uses a persuasion which is enhanced by the terms of his analysis. To lift the physicist's conception of an energy balance into the realms of sociology is dangerous if pushed too far. In Dr. Wingfield-Stratford's hands it sharpens the issue and helps to establish an intricate argument.

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The book ends, as any such work is bound to do, with a hunting of the Snark Nationalism. In two concluding chapters the author puts the choice firmly before us. This is what we are heading for, he says—and writes a terrible description of three-dimensional warfare, which reads like a Wellsian nightmare, but is known to be actively in preparation. And finally, the historian and the scholar abdicate, and the private citizen—the man who may be able to hate a Ruritanian but can find no sane reason for hating and fearing Ruritania—takes up the pen. In this appeal for a broadening of patriotism, and a practical reconsideration of the Sermon on the Mount, the idealism whose pressure can be felt beneath the whole of the author's argument wells strongly to the surface. As a plan, it may be hopeless. But there are many gentle minds who think it the only hope.

THE NATIONAL POET OF SCOTLAND

The Burns We Love. By A. A. THOMSON. Jenkins. 7s. 6d.

Mr. Thomson begins his biography with "An age tends to take its name from the prevailing habit of mind which is thought to characterise it. Thus the Eighteenth Century has been called the Age of Reason. The Victorian era has been called the Age of Sentiment or (what to some minds is much the same thing) The Age of Steam." Stimulated by this really excellent joke the reader might anticipate much acid criticism and raillery of wit to usher him into the century decorated by Burns. But no! After some pages heavy with Victorian irony and scorn, the chapter ends with "Damn the pedant, frigid soul of criticism for ever and ever."

There is no further need to beat round the bush. The book is in no way a critical study of Burns. Rather is it a panegyric of Burns, a passionate defence and eulogy of Burns. According to Mr. Thomson, Burns has been much misrepresented. He lays right and left into Burns' detractors (it is really surprising to learn that there have been so many, even in Scotland) and makes mincemeat of the current notion that Burns was in any serious sense of the word a "toper." Burns had an exceptionally hard life, and he died of worry, overwork, and exposure to the weather. Mr. Thomson's fluent earnestness and enthusiasm inspire attention. After the first rather futile and unnecessary chapter, the writing is fervid enough to carry the reader along and promote conviction. The story of Burns's life is well told, and at least one of the supplementary chapters "The Rough Burr-Thistle," though not in any sense of the word a criticism of Burns, is an excellent criticism of life—of Burns's time and our own. Says Mr. Thomson in some of his typical pregnant sentences:

> Burns showed that a good nationalist could be a good internationalist, without abating one whit his courage or loyalty. We who fought through the Great War and know something of its causes and its aftermath, need no warning against the evils of a bigoted and narrow nationalism. . . . We know, too, of honest and misguided folk, who, seeing only the blind hates and ignorant prejudices of nationalism at its worst, would call all patriotism evil and throw away the good along with the bad, forgetting that a man who cannot love his own country cannot love humanity. Burns lays an unerring finger on each of these follies.

Burns was the poet of a nation and united all classes. He scourged hypocrisy and sham, and he elevated honesty, courage, simplicity and sincerity. And, according to Mr. Thomson, he gave the Scotch people a soul, or at least gave them self-knowledge and made them aware of their souls. Yet, for all his rich music, Burns was an earthly poet rather than a spiritual poet, a poet of the heart and the emotions rather than the imagination. He saw the heart of God in a wild flower; but his eyes were fixed on the ground rather than on the stars. His very limitations have helped to fix his popularity: had he sung with the tongues of angels fewer Scotchmen would have listened. Mr. Thomson avoids telling us all this, but he makes it rather clear, all the same.

Mr. G. K. Chesterton adds a preface, and its amusingly characteristic pages contain more real criticism than the whole of Mr. Thomson's book. But then Mr. Chesterton (who makes this an occasion for throwing some apples—scented and otherwise—at ranters and Puritans) may not really care for Burns much more than he appears to care for the Scotch.

HERBERT E. PALMER.

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AMONG all thinking people to-day the question of what is wrong with the world grows more urgent and more baffling. Mr. Wells has the supreme merit of stimulating and challenging his readers by the lucid and forceful originality of his views. Below are some opinions of his new book "The Work, Wealth and Happiness of Mankind."

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ONE PENNY.

THE DAWN

The Fountain. By CHARLES MORGAN. Macmillan. 7s. 6d.

The desire of man, the only desire which is "flawless," is the desire for invulnerability. So ponders Lewis Alison at the opening of this most remarkable novel, as he is taken from the turmoil of war to the strange, unnatural seclusion of internment in Holland. He hopes during his time of isolation to discover the secret of seclusion, to redeem the time by catching at that moment, deep, intense, which, if ever it be held in reality, is held for ever. *The Fountain* is the story of Alison's failure and success. It might be classed as a philosophical novel, though that would be a misleading description if it made readers think of it as of the same kind as *Marius the Epicurean*. Mr. Morgan, as is Alison, is interested in philosophy; but his business, just as Alison's, is life—especially when life is most obtrusive, breaking up the pattern which man, in his desire to escape, would fain substitute for it. For those who can read, who can bring to that pleasure something of its power and intelligence which a work of art always requires, *The Fountain* is a novel of rare and exciting quality. It has its faults; but its faults are those of excess, betraying only the author's occasional inability to control the intellectual and imaginative content of his theme. There are not, after all, many novelists of to-day who are concerned with the adventures of the soul; that is the task Mr. Morgan has set himself, and it is a splendid act of justice that, as he tries magnificently to accomplish that task, he succeeds at the same time, with an effortless ease, in giving us the most beautiful, most assuring account of physical love that has appeared for years in a novel. Alison's road to the invulnerable is chequered. First, he finds his reading interrupted, and his thought diverted by the needs of his fellow prisoners. He has to join in their plan for an escape—though he is unconcerned about the body's freedom while the soul is in shackles. Then he is distracted by the friendly overtures of the van Leydens. He has known the Baroness van Leyden when she was Mrs. Quillan and lived near his home in England; he has known well, and taught as a child, her daughter Julie, now Julie von Narwitz, whose husband is fighting with the Germans. When these people seek him out, he finds he cannot escape—he, and his friend Ballater are moved to a cottage on the van Leyden estate; the old friendship with Julie, after the brief time of embarrassing readjustment (exquisitely described) is overcome, is renewed, and flowers into passionate love. Alison leaves Enkendaal for Leiden, on the pretext of studying; but flight brings no security, only a deep sense of the unreality of separation. He returns, this time to live in the van Leyden castle to study family papers; and Julie and he become lovers. The books called *The Flight* and *The Tower* contain writing of a lucid and limpid loveliness, a breath-taking ardour and passion which are rare indeed in fiction; the splendour of the writing grows naturally, is magically part of the narrative, with no hint of the patched brilliance of consciously fine style:

> She was filled with lightness and exaltation, as though by some miracle she had been made exempt from the rule of life, from time, consequence and price, and the joy now approaching her were indeed magical and detached—scarcely her own joy, interwoven with the stuff of her existence, but the joy of a song or a play to which she was audience; and she began to think not of the actual winter but of the scented darkness of a summer's night, not of the physical man that was to take her but of a being that was part of the fire in her own limbs, not even of herself as she was—a half-naked girl crouched by the fire—but of an illusion proceeding from within her as music proceeds from an instrument. But no sooner did she begin to recognise this aerial independence of circumstance as the illusion of love itself and to whisper in her mind, This is love, than the illusion was dissipated, fleeing as Eros fled before Psyche's lamp, and she saw that she was naked, and was ashamed, and made haste to cover herself.

Then Narwitz comes to his wife. At the beginning of the war he decided—they had been three months married—that he, the German, and Julie, the English girl, had better not meet till the war's end; so sent her out of his country to Holland and her mother. Now, broken by gas, he returns to a wife who has never known him, to her lover who has scarcely thought of him; and, in his own agony, becomes the way of revelation to Alison and Julie. Mr. Morgan here has a great argument, and often in the book he rises to the height of it. Narwitz is, by these others' actions, removed into a world where he must either find himself invulnerable or destroyed, and reaches safety at once for them and himself. He dies, leaving them both aware that what has come to each of them through him is more to them even than what has been so splendidly between them. His subordination of self shows them how it is possible to take the second place, and so reach a self-fulfilment impossible to the egotist. In final chapters that move quickly and surely, through the vulgarity of Julie's Dutch connections, through the sad awareness of old van Leyden, Mr. Morgan conducts the lovers to a haven unsuspected by either when they embarked on their adventure of romantic passion.

The Fountain is in the fine tradition of English fiction; there is no need here of any ear-breaking, drum-smashing experiments; a great play in a good theatre can dispense with these. The style is remarkable for its gravity and its subtlety; occasionally a little slow in movement, a little inclined to divagate both in description and in meditation (there is too often an apparent identity between Alison's ideas and Mr. Morgan's), the story, once the reader surrenders himself, is of intense human excitement. The skill and care shown in the portrayal of the minor characters are alone sufficient to prove Mr. Morgan a real "maker"; but it is by his portrayal of Alison, Julie and Narwitz that the book's essential quality is declared. In Julie there are things unexplained. She seems at times to move a little too quickly from the schoolgirl to the woman, and from an English girl to a woman who accepts the Continental idea of the arranged marriage. It is hard to believe that she has ever been "married" to Narwitz. It is not that she is unawakened, imaginatively virginal; that would be possible had she been married three years and borne children; but she feels and thinks like a girl who has never had the occasion to be other than unawakened. It is as if Mr. Morgan had started with one girl—the child whom Alison knew—and then substituted another. Still, in the portrait of that other, Mr. Morgan has spent all his great powers of romantic, imaginative drawing; she is an unforgettable figure. Alison is always of a piece. There is rather too much of his meditations—and it is a pity that he never met anyone who could have enlightened him about the Christian doctrine of the body; but he is one of the few successful examples in English fiction of the man of intellect. To find his parallel one would have to go to Turgenev, for he has a richness, a substance, that forbid one to compare him with any hero of Henry James. His relation to

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his friends, to van Leyden, are beautifully shown; if there is an occasional condescension in him, it is forgiven as his tragedy proceeds to its conclusion with the return of Narwitz. Here, especially in his handling of the intimacy between Narwitz and Alison, is the book's key; pity that is strong and salt, love that can know abasement and triumph, discipline that is of the heart as well as of the head . . .these are the notes of the novel's most ambitious section. Narwitz, a traveller more advanced on the road Alison is venturing, discovers that it is not by knowledge nor by understanding that man is brought closest to the eternal values:

> Knowledge is static, a stone in the stream, but wonder is the stream itself—in common men a trickle clouded by doubt, in poets and saints a sparkling rivulet, in God a mighty river, bearing the whole commerce of the divine mind. Is it not true that, even on earth, as knowledge increases, wonder deepens?.

The Fountain is a rare refreshment after the quickly evaporating liquors most frequently provided in modern fiction. Mr. Morgan's novel may have for our English fiction and English readers something of the effect produced in Germany by Thomas Mann's *The Magic Mountain*; it is without the ponderous solemnity of the German story, and has a quickening, poetical quality that we were afraid had disappeared from English fiction.

PRELUDE TO INDUSTRIALISM

The Economic History of England. By E. LIPSON. Vols. II and III, The Age of Mercantilism. Black. 30s.

It is not true, presumably, that economists were seen recently making solemn procession, some to the Cobden statue at Mornington Crescent, and some to the toga-clad statue of Huskisson in Pimlico Gardens. Mr. Lipson's massive volumes on the history of the last phase of full-blown mercantilism in this country may give the courage or consolation so hard to come by and so necessary to all who are disturbed by our current economic situation. Whether the present Government's new economic policy is to be really new, or only to look new, those who wish to study it will do well to know its ancestor, and the environment in which it functioned. For all such Mr. Lipson will prove an admirable guide. He has undertaken the enormous task of covering once again the ground of Cunningham's famous volume on *The Mercantile System*, and of absorbing all the new work and the new sources made available since Cunningham revised it a quarter of a century ago. He has carried through this herculean task with distinction. While Cunningham will still keep his place on our shelves—the more certainly because his mercantilism will square with our newly acquired national policy—Lipson assuredly will stand by his side. The qualities of scholarship and exposition that made his earlier volume on *The Middle Ages* so attractive and necessary are just as evident here. Mr. Lipson knows his sources. His list of authorities is not an empty array of titles but a scholar's working-list of monographs and volumes of transactions of learned societies and contemporary books and pamphlets, which he knows from the inside as well as from the catalogues.

The period covered in Mr. Lipson's volumes extends from the accession of Queen Elizabeth to the Industrial Revolution and the Agrarian Revolution of the later eighteenth century. In the first, industry, foreign trade and agriculture are dealt with: in the second, the Mercantile System, the control of industry and the relief of the poor. This broad division between economic pursuits and economic and social policy is logical and simple, but it makes the use of the index, which fortunately is a good one, quite indispensable. It is, in fact, over-simple. Why, for example, is there no specific section on transport and communications, for which one must turn to that part of the chapter on agriculture which deals with the Corn Market? Or why, again, should the reader have to disinter from the chapter on the Control of Industry, under the section Capital and Finance, Mr. Lipson's account of the banking institutions and practice of these centuries? There might be reason enough in an account of our own degenerate days to find finance so placed, but it is scarcely justified in this first period of mercantilism. But the major defect of Mr. Lipson's arrangement is not that it is occasionally inconvenient. It is, rather, that the story is presented as a series of monographs instead of a continuous unfolding of the processes of development. Surely it is not true of economic history that it does not admit of dynamic presentation.

The subject-matter of Mr. Lipson's various chapters is presented with admirable clarity and with full reference to sources. It is not true of Mr. Lipson's work, as it was broadly of Archdeacon Cunningham's, that the footnotes are more intriguing than the text. Mr. Lipson's footnotes can be omitted by all readers save the specialist. The strength of the different sections, however, shows considerable variation. That on coal, for example, is a useful preliminary reconnaissance of a field that can be better known: it would have been strengthened by the inclusion or discussion of the material unearthed years ago in a couple of articles in the *American Historical Review*. Again, the chapter on agriculture suffers from the attempt to describe agriculture as a whole when in fact there were several agricultures, and the reactions to change and the urge to adopt new methods varied accordingly. That, however, must have been a peculiarly difficult chapter to write, and it is certainly interesting to read. The central chapter of the whole work is that on the Mercantile System. For Mr. Lipson mercantilism is "the pursuit of economic power in the sense of economic self-sufficiency. Its underlying idea was to establish the power or strength of a State by making it independent of other States in the economic sphere." But his analysis leads him to disapprove of the Navigation Laws though he does not by any means condemn mercantilism in general. Truly it is difficult in these days of unbelief to know what to condemn! And the oncoming industrialism lies round Mr. Lipson's corner. Because of that, the appearing of which is known to Mr. Lipson and not to those whose actions and policies he analyses, these volumes seem to lead to inconclusivenesses, to be left in mid-air. In due course he will, we may most earnestly hope, carry his history forward to our own day. In the meantime we have nothing but gratitude for these scholarly pages. They will make the substance of every student's studies in the middle phase of English economic history for many a day to come.

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This is a most original and interesting piece of work. Dr. Haarhoff, starting from a demonstration that the science of agriculture as set forth in the Georgics is still of practical value to the South African farmer, goes on to establish a number of similarities between the latter and that early Roman type whose qualities Vergil was anxious to commemorate. In sternness of moral outlook, in loyalty to family, in the many points in common between Stoicism and Calvinism, in the destruction of farms and wrecking of farmhouses that followed the civil wars in Rome and the Boer War in South Africa, and in the consequent depopulation of rural areas, the Roman and the Voor-

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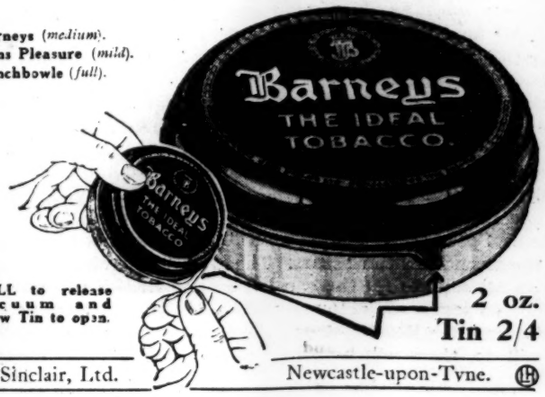

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trekker offer a remarkable parallel. But the book is not only the statement of a case, however interesting. Dr. Haarhoff's study of Vergil's mind and work gives evidence both of scholarship and enthusiasm: and his conclusion is practical.

> To us in South Africa he (Vergil) would say that it is well to cultivate individual customs and character and the practical genius of our people; but that we should also seek out the universal spirit that makes us fundamentally one with others.

The book is none the worse for a simple style and a pleasant humility: and the bibliography is as full as could be desired.

Four Frames. By SHALIMAR. Blackwood. 7s. 6d.

Captain Hendry, who uses the pseudonym "Shalimar," has become known as a competent and engrossing writer of sea-stories, and it is surprising to find him giving us in *Four Frames* a curious mixture of Bolshevik politics, crime, fishing, and various avocations of a Scottish holiday. Unfortunately, it is also disappointing. The background of the book changes from Siberia to Strathspey, and the four frames of the title are the four glimpses which Major Alexeiev, formerly of the Russian Army, catches of his friend Milukov as he emerges from mysterious obscurity to avenge the murder of Admiral Koltchak at Irkutsk. But in his treatment of this theme Captain Hendry seems to have lost the spontaneity and vivid narrative gift which made his sea-stories popular. He is more at home when he writes of Strathspey, but even there he allows himself too much rope. Descriptions of fishing expeditions soon become wearisome to any but the devotees of angling, but these at least are convincingly written, whereas the rest of the book, including Alexeiev's love affair with the wife of the murderer and the sudden introduction of a Chicago gangster element, is conventional and amateurish.

Gifts of Life. A Retrospect. By EMIL LUDWIG. Putnam. 21s.

It is curious how little of the real man is to be found between the covers of this book—at any rate in its present English form. Herr Ludwig tells us a great deal about himself, that is to say, he gives us a great deal of information, and yet the idea which emerges from the volume—four-hundred and twenty-seven pages, forty lines crammed on to every page—is not so much of a man writing his life as of a loud voice rumbling continuously from a dictaphone. Such energy, such loquacity, such vacuity! Romantic, polemic, reminiscent, the auto-biographer never brings himself to life. He remains always, though portentous, disembodied, a rich voice from the bowels of a machine, discoursing now on the subject of his early love-affairs, now chronicling the history of his pet-dog:

> . . . . Shortly afterwards, when we had moved into the new house, my wife had occasion to beat the terrier for stealing, whereupon Othello came running up, evidently stirred by some mediæval feeling of loyalty to the canine race, and bit my wife above the breast. We were now obliged to give him away, for only a short while before she had been surprised to find that she was about to become a mother.

This entertaining domestic episode shines quite vividly from the woolly texture of surrounding paragraphs. Elsewhere, a minimum of literary effect is cleverly combined with a maximum of verbal outlay.

Water Diviners and Their Methods. By HENRI MAGER. Bell. 16s.

Following an historical survey of dowsing and dowsers in France, M. Mager gives us a scientific explanation of water divining which makes the initial mystery even more mysterious. M. Mager is himself a successful diviner, and, with the detectors he has invented, claims not only to be able to say where water is to be found, but also to determine its potable quality, and to some extent its mineral content. M. Mager explains the mechanism of divination as being due to the vibratory images emitted by all natural objects, and discerned by the detector; he uses a cylindrical whale-bone rod for general divination, and especially coloured detectors for particular investigation. M. Mager explains clearly his own procedure, but owing, perhaps, to more elaborate description in another volume, we have to take his theory of vibratory images very much for granted. Anyway, the theory seems rather persuasive than conclusive.

Nature Fantasy in Australia. By ALEC H. CHISHOLM. Dent. 12s. 6d.

In this charmingly illustrated work—many of the plates represent nature-photography at its best—Mr. Chisholm describes the birds of Sydney and its neighbourhood, and, incidentally, the wild and varied scene that has preserved in contiguity to a great city such an amazing wealth of bird-life. With the exception of one or two of the bell-birds, all the birds described, including such interesting examples as the bower and the lyre bird, may be found within a radius of fifty miles of Australia's largest town, while quite a considerable proportion, and those the most attractive, nest in the city itself and its suburbs, which owing to a happy intractability of the landscape have perforce included in their area wild spaces never tamed by man. Here is a book that all nature lovers will enjoy and all naturalists value.

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About Motoring

A NEW SPORTS CAR

AMONGST the many follies of my youth I especially remember buying the first car which the Alvis factory ever produced. Worse still, I bought it before a single nut of it existed. In fact, I bought it after a perusal of the original drawings. Nowadays it would be tolerably safe to buy No. 1 of a new chassis designed by any first-class factory; but it was decidedly perilous to do so when Alvis entered the industry. I repaired my folly by cancelling the order after a trial run of the experimental hand-made chassis. It by no means fulfilled the rosy anticipations of the draughtsmen, for it was distinctly noisy and far less speedy than the prophets foretold. Fortunately, the company lacked neither brains nor capital, and these early disappointments were rapidly remedied. Later on I bought several Alvis cars. All of them were fast, all of them were quiet, none of them ever gave me any bother on the road, and none of them ever cost me a penny in repairs. A motor journalist, like the Athenians of St. Paul's day, hurries incessantly on to something new; and when my Alvis cars were put up for sale they always looked newish, and always commanded a high price for their age. So they stand out pleasantly in my memory; and my final tribute to their quality is the fact that during the disastrous year that has just passed they have eclipsed their previous sales records.

Some courage is required to produce an expensive new car in the present depression. The new Alvis Speed Twenty is priced at £695 with an open four-seated body, and is guaranteed to possess a maximum speed of 85-90 miles in full touring form, 100 miles being possible with a light shell body, irrespective of special tuning, such as would be attempted for the race track. Speeds of about 50 and 70 miles an hour are credited to the second and third gears. The car may therefore be regarded as an attempt to fill the gap left on the British market by the lamented demise of the Bentley. The Bentley is to be resurrected; but even if the Bentley stages a brilliant come back, as we all hope it will do, there will be plenty of room for this very cheap and substantial *débutante*. All the Alvis cars since the first two

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Constable

years of the firm's history were ended have possessed a distinct characteristic. The average sports car conveys some impression of delicacy. The delicacy may take one of two forms. Possibly the car is temperamental and capricious; to-day it careers in inspired fashion, running smoothly with astounding life and *abandon*; to-morrow it is a little heavy and sluggish for no apparent reason. Or the delicacy may be more akin to flimsiness; small parts break, or adjustments wear out of perfect setting, and the unlucky owner is perpetually tinkering in search of that last veneer of speed and acceleration, now mysteriously evaporated. The Alvis has never suffered from either of these faults. From its cradle onwards it has always been solid, reliable, and consistent. Dependability seems to have been the first requirement of its sponsors; and they never accepted any speed which might on occasions be merely volatile. Truth to tell, there was precious little speed in the first year, and not too much in the second. But the speed grew and grew, though never divorced from reliability of the highest standards. The car in its more recent editions has always reminded me of an International wing three-quarter whom I once knew. At rest in a drawing-room he would strike anybody as a quiet, heavy fellow, ostensibly rather dull and stodgy, though good to look at and obviously built for power. Put him on the turf at Twickenham, and he was a dazzling revelation—speed, grace, power, sinuous, elusive, triumphant. I can imagine, though I shall never see, a horse which combined the pace of a Flying Fox with the thews of those gigantic cart-horses which were the pride of our crack breweries until the motor lorry robbed beer deliveries of romance and beauty. In metal the Alvis is the peer of such a horse. Examine it on a dais, and it suggests robustness, simplicity, power, longevity. Take it on the road, and you find it has all these things coupled with the qualities of an extremely youthful greyhound.

The new Twenty is a six-cylinder with unit four-speed gear box. The third speed is of the silent type. The enormously stiff frame is of special interest, and the brakes are proportioned to the speed capacity. The valves are operated by push-rods, and the valve gear is lubricated with exceptional care, so that rapid wear and the need for frequent and fiddling adjustments are alike eliminated. There is nothing sensational or revolutionary about any items of design, and the guiding principle throughout has been to extract the utmost efficiency out of standard notions. I have only one criticism to pass on the mechanical aspects, and this relates to a personal fad of my own, at which many good judges scoff. The engine has three carburetters. This multiple carburetter system is unquestionably essential to wringing the last atom of power out of a simple design. In practice it is a preferable alternative to rival methods, such as using a very high compression ratio (and so making an engine rough), or lightening certain engine parts down to a point at which the safety margin becomes somewhat narrow. Nevertheless, triple carburetters are rather a trial to an owner. Engines must be subjected to top overhauls every now and then if only to remove carbon deposits. Whenever this job is done there is a risk of throwing the three carburetters out of balance. Unbalancing may occur in remounting the control gear, or in the refitting of any joint or washer which affects the induction system. Quite a small blunder will nullify the merits theoretically obtained by the trio. The average owner and the average garage mechanic are hardly equal to the practical problems involved; and if the trio get thrown out of balance a skilled hand is required. If I were a manufacturer, and adopted a multiple carburetter engine, I should feel bound to keep a service man circulating round my customers. A small output of 100 m.p.h. cars listed at less than £700 will not justify much free service; and owners dislike paying the real cost of such attention. However, the alternatives are either a slower car, or a less substantial engine, or a rougher engine; and all design is a matter of compromise. For the rest the entire design is admirable, and completely free from any cause for criticism.

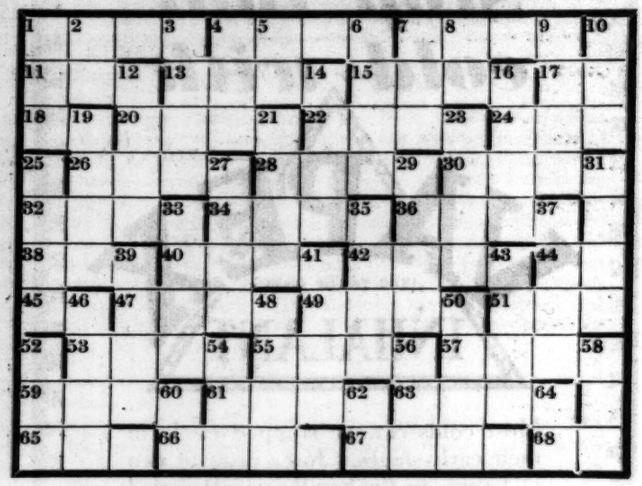
I have no space to describe the mechanism in detail, but attention may fairly be drawn to the excessive care shown in the cooling and lubrication. These are items which few British manufacturers develop to the pitch required for Continental touring, where prolonged high speed and interminable climbs create special stresses.

Many special bodies are sure to be developed for this chassis, and it should be especially charming with a good sports coupé; a closed body of this type, built lightly and well streamlined, should prove no slower than the touring model.

R. E. DAVIDSON.

Playtime

TRINCULO'S CROSSWORD



PETITS FOURS (*By request*)

ACROSS

1. Gun that wants breaking in.
4. "Somewhere in Saxony."
7. A whip round on Dartmoor.
11. There are small ones in the newspapers.
13. Therefore curdle your blood.
15. Householder's burden.
17. That's that was.
18. Before Caxton.
20. Snare with a painter in it.
22. Commemorates "our George."
24. In Shakespeare there is muoch of this.
26. Euclid I 5.
28. Paper of 6 *dn.*
30. Just let it stand.
32. Nothing for Lord Snowden.
34. An artist's canvas is useless.
36. Tom's become more than more.
38, 44. "I would that my tongue could."
40. Universal terminus.
42. Special concern of Mr. Lloyd's.
44. See 38.
45. End of 53 *ac.*
47. Rank before the missus.
49. Product of 41 *dn.*
51. Born at Festubert.
53. Created a hunchback.
55. Not a good waiter.
57. End of an active life.
59. Haunt of a famous carnivore.
61. Afflicts.
63. Not unrelated.
65. Quite a lot of 55 *ac.*
66. Nickname of a modern painter.
67. Reverse of 30 *ac.*
68. Pola has.

DOWN

1. The asymmetrical river.
2. "If I had served my God" said Cromwell "as I have served my King)."
3. One good bird deserves another.
4. Some more of 55 *ac.*
5. Coming back?
6. Bit by bit.
7. From Shropshire.
8. The bisected atom.
9. Skinny area.
10. Long may he reign.
12. Put away.
14. Formerly in Rome.
16. Elegant term for viands.
19. Where to put your gangster.
21. Breaks no speed records.
23. Middling upside-down.
25. Joiner.
27. Saxpence-banger.
29. Turn up a fruit for Ludwig.
31. 15 *ac.* re-sown.
33. Not popular with schoolgirls.
35. Half of "his favourite flower."
37. Golfers' river.
39. You get it in the neck from him.
41. "Live up"—but not to me.
43. One of the —Danes.
46. State, largely industrial.
48. Wealth without end.
50. Turn of the tide in Fleet Street.
52. Mineral.
54. Sounds mineral but isn't.
56. Extend with out.
58. Said to be unlucky.
60, 62. Japanese diplomat much bemused.
64. One of the names that the Bellman would answer to.

LAST WEEK'S CROSSWORD

ACROSS.—1. entomophilous. 12. Neapolitan. 13. tab (Cantab.). 15. impassionate. 19. garter. 21. pneuma(tic). 23. chrestomathic. 26. ib-is. 27. motet (totem). 28. scio. 30. onset (notes). 31. trenosn (tonsure). 33. Tudor. 34. Herakles. 36. orarion. 38. enemy *rev.* 40. sisterliness.

DOWN.—1. enunciator. 2. neighbours. 3. tamarind. 4. oppressors. 5. moats (atoms). 6. lo(ss) *rev.* 7. Pis(tol) (*Henry V*). 8. pith *rev.* 9. ia. 10. ln (nail). 11. tau (the T cross) *rev.* 13. tauh (Utah). 14. beacons. 16. totes *rev.* 17. (lo)on. 18. netsuke. 20. rotten (*Hamlet*). 22. MII. 24. merry. 25. ate. 27. merit (mitre). 29. Colne (Colne Valley was Mr. Snowden's constituency). 32. sees. 34. Hoe. 35. ami. 37. ai. 39. (lo)ss.

THIS WEEK'S PUZZLE

I am indebted to a correspondent for the following:

"Five ladies, accompanied each by her daughter, purchased cloth at the same shop. Each of the ten bought as many feet of cloth as she paid farthings per foot. Each mother spent 8/5½ more than her daughter. Mrs. Robinson spent 6/- more than Mrs. Evans, who only spent about a quarter of what Mrs. Jones did, while Mrs. Smith spent most of all. Mrs. Brown bought 21 yards more than did Bessie, one of the girls, while of the other girls Annie bought 16 yards more than May and spent £3. 0. 8d. more than Emily. The other girl's Christian name was Ada. What was her surname?"

LAST WEEK'S PUZZLE

Arsenal 2: United 0.

Crossing the Limpopo.—Correct solutions were received from Bertha Brewster, F. N. James and A. O. Ritchie.

CALIBAN.

London Amusements

MATINEES

All at 2.30 p. m., unless otherwise stated.

FORTUNE. THE DARK SAINT. Wed., Sat.

GAIETY. HOLD MY HAND. Wed., Sat.

GLOBE. PUNCHINELLO. Wed. & Sat.

HIPPODROME. BOW BELLS. Daily.

QUEEN'S THE IMMORTAL HOUR. W., S.

ST. MARTIN'S THE NELSON TOUCH. Tues. & Fri.

SAVOY. AUTUMN CROCUS. Wed., Th., Sat.

STRAND. IT'S A GIRL. Thurs. & Sat.

WESTMINSTER. A PAIR OF SPECTACLES. Wed., Sat., 3.

WYNDHAM'S. THE GREEN PACK. Wed., Sat.

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HOLD MY HAND,
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Feb. 14, Trauberg's *THE BLUE EXPRESS, The Town of To-morrow* (German Town-Planning Film), and H. G. Wells' *Blue Bottles*, a comedy with Elsa Lanchester, directed by Ivor Montagu. Last days *Warning Shadows* and *Les Nouveaux Messieurs.*

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THE WEEK IN THE CITY

By TOREADOR

"PROTECTION" FALLS FLAT—THE NEED FOR INFLATION—DEFAULTS AND GREEK BONDS—THE TRAGEDY OR MIRACLE OF THE POUND

"GOOD-BYE to all that Free Trade," has so far caused no boom in British industrial "equities" on the Stock Exchange. Even the iron and steel market, which can reasonably look forward to early favours from the new Tariff Committee, has seen no sign of public buying. A firm of stock-brokers has issued a feverish appeal to its clients to switch from fixed interest securities, including gilt-edged, into equity shares, but as this coincided with the publication of the Ministry of Labour returns, showing an increase in unemployment, the appeal fell somewhat flat. It is, of course, an absurd suggestion, but not a few people in the City appear to be ignorant of the fact that we are "deflating"—that the greatest success of the National Government has been to maintain the internal purchasing power of the pound at the expense of the purchasing power of the individual. Signs of deflation are everywhere. As compared with a year ago deposits of the ten clearing banks are down by £155 millions and advances by £30 millions. The weekly full-time wage receipts of nearly three million workers are down by £405,000—an annual loss of £21 millions. Direct taxation is up by £86½ millions. That Bank rate should remain at 6 per cent., exerting severe deflationary pressure on business, while short-term money is so plentiful that Treasury bill rates have been down to 4⅛ per cent., is a crying scandal. So appalled is the Wealth Utilisation Committee of Geneva by the extent of the deflation in France and the United States—estimated at $1,208 millions since 1927 for the first and $9,000 millions since 1920 for the second—that their latest bulletin (No. 13) which M. Abbati sends me urges a moratorium for the tax-payers of these two "poor" countries. This is a strange proposal, but something must be done to arouse public opinion in the over-deflated countries. I agree that "a moratorium for their own solvent tax-payers is better business for America and France than a moratorium for bankrupt foreigners," but the Governments must hurry: their tax-payers will not be solvent for long.

* * *

It appears that we are to be robbed of the best inflationary features of the Reconstruction Finance Corporation in America. The debentures of the Corporation have been made ineligible for rediscount at the Federal Reserve Banks. This is unfortunate, as the debentures might have been employed by the national banks as a base for currency issues. The Corporation, with General Dawes as President and Mr. Eugene Meyer as Chairman, will do its best to unfreeze the banks, building and loan associations, insurance companies and railroads to whom it is empowered to make loans. All this is anti-deflationary, not inflationary but as bank failures are still going on at an amazing pace, the Corporation may do some useful work. The next step is for the Federal Reserve Banks to cement the work of the Reconstruction Finance Corporation by expanding credit. Mr. J. M. Keynes, in his Halley Stewart Lecture last week, remarked. "Unless we achieve an organised inflation, the only alternative solution is one of the general default of debts and the disappearance of the existing credit system, followed by rebuilding upon quite new foundations. We have to hope, therefore, that the financial crisis will wear itself out before a point of catastrophe and general default has been reached. This appears to me to be happening. I incline to the view that the greatest dangers have been surmounted during the past few months. . . . The deflationary pressure exerted on the rest of the world by the unbalanced creditor position of France and the U.S.A. will be relaxed, through their losing their creditor position. . . . We shall then enter the cheap money phase. This is the point at which we might hope for the beginning of recovery." He expects the creditor position of France to be completely undermined before the end of 1932, but I am doubtful whether the financial crisis will wear itself out before the stage of general default has been reached.

* * *

An enterprising, or is it lugubrious, firm of stock-jobbers publishes a list of "Foreign Bonds in Default"—confined to those quoted on the London Stock Exchange. The defaults number fifty. The total amount of the defaulted loans outstanding is £101.7 millions—valued in the market in January at £25.5 millions. The loss of income to the bondholders amounts to over £5 millions per annum. Every month there are new additions to the list of the defaulters. And every day almost there are new scares. The latest concerns Greece. It is natural that the bondholders should be greatly alarmed by the announcement that Sir Otto Niemeyer has gone to Greece to advise the Government on its financial problems. They are well aware what happened to Australia and Brazil after this financial doctor had been called to the bedside—the first patient had a very narrow escape and the second expired. Just as a vulture is sure to fly to the spot where man or beast is on the point of death, so Sir Otto is certain to hasten to the scene where a Government is on the point of default. Small wonder that the Council of Foreign Bondholders shiver whenever Sir Otto leaves Victoria by a boat-train. The Greek Government is finding difficulty in procuring the requisite foreign exchange to meet its external interest requirements. M. Venizelos has asked for an advance of £2,500,000 from Great Britain, France and Italy to be renewable periodically until such time as a long-term loan can be arranged. He has wisely begged the three Governments to make their own enquiries. Certainly Greece deserves well of her creditors. Since 1898 Greek finances have been partly under the control of an International Financial Commission which collects the "assigned" revenues and applies them to the services of the secured foreign loans. Moreover the League of Nations was responsible for the 7% Refugee Loan of 1924. Up to November 1931 the "assigned" revenues were well maintained—Drs. 3,622 millions against Drs. 3,611 millions in the corresponding period of 1930. (Twelve months figures for 1930, Drs. 3,963 millions.) At the par of exchange these revenues gave ample cover for the sterling loans issued since 1924, but to-day the revenues are declining and the Bank of Greece is losing gold and other foreign exchange fast. The present market prices as compared with the highest prices in 1931 of the leading Greek loans are given in the next table:—

	High 1931	Present Price.	Flat Yield %	Red. Yield %
7% Refugee Loan 1924	104½	69	£10 7 10	£10 11 0
6% Stabilisation of Refugee 1928 ..	94½	54xd.	11 2 0	11 5 6
6% Public Works Loan 1928 ..	90	45½	13 9 2	13 12 0
6% Public Works Loan 1931 ..	85½	53½	10 16 2 15 13 8*	11 2 6 15 12 0*

* Allowing for gold premium, interest being payable in London in sterling or in Amsterdam in florins at 12.107 to the £.

* * *

The day I received for review a copy of *The Tragedy of the Pound* (Kegan Paul, 7s. 6d. net), by that most prolific financial writer, Dr. Paul Einzig, I saw the City plastered with posters announcing an article by "Candidus" in *The Investor's Chronicle* called "The Miracle of the Pound." This seemed a curious coincidence but each writer appeared to prove his case. Dr. Einzig, in his very readable book, is looking back on the fight for the gold pound and with a fine dramatic sense makes us feel the tragedy of the defeat—as when some world champion boxer is knocked out in the ring after a few hopeless rounds. "Candidus" refers to the miracle of the pound's stability "off" gold—and at a time when the Bank of England was buying foreign exchange at the rate of £13 millions (sterling) a month. Dr. Einzig should have called his book "The Tragedy of the Gold Standard" for the downfall of the pound was really the downfall of the gold standard. Who wants to work a gold standard again when to quote Mr. McKenna—"the great creditor nations act in such a way as to create a corner in the metal"? I suggest that Dr. Einzig should now think out a new paper currency system for countries who wish to forget gold. *Lloyds Bank Review* for this month contains an article discussing, and citing many objections to, the "sterling bloc." Discussion is good and I hope other joint stock banks will follow suit. Let us all address our minds to this problem. A good plan is to re-read Mr. Keynes' *Tract on Monetary Reform* (1923 but still advanced) and work from this base as if the use of gold had been abolished by the Disarmament Conference as inhumane.

* * *

Mr. Runciman's speech on Tuesday indicates that the Government has begun to give some thought (though a little muddled) to the conception of the "sterling bloc." "I see no reason," said Mr. Runciman, "why the sterling circle should not be considerably extended if we pay our way and show that we are not dependent upon paper for the maintenance of our currency." But let us rather show that we are not dependent upon gold for a currency system. Let us not be afraid of a rise in prices or an increase in the currency issue. As long as we maintain an active market in forward exchange, the world will trade with us.

COMPANY MEETING

LLOYDS BANK LIMITED

SATISFACTORY RESULTS IN YEAR OF DIFFICULTY

MR. J. BEAUMONT PEASE'S ADDRESS

The Seventy-fourth Ordinary General Meeting of Lloyds Bank Limited was held on Friday, 5th February, at Southern House, Cannon Street, London.

Mr. J. Beaumont Pease (chairman) presided. In moving the adoption of the report the Chairman referred to the death of Mr. Philip Nobel (director) and retirement of Mr. Alfred Davidson (joint general manager in Birmingham), and said (in part):—

On the liabilities side the capital remains the same, but, as we explain in the report, we have taken £2,500,000 from the published reserve in order that the value of the bank's investments might be written down to market value or under.

Dealing with the German Standstill Agreement, the Chairman gave figures of the City's commitments with Germany, saying:—

These figures are a complete refutation of the charge brought against London financial houses that, tempted by the offer of high rates, they risked huge sums of English deposit money at short notice for the purposes of German capital expenditure. On the contrary they show that the amount of the acceptance credits quoted above was by no means excessive for London to have granted to a great country like Germany, with a vast import and export trade.

Assets and Profit and Loss

There is a large reduction of over £10,000,000 in Treasury Bills, while the total of our liquid assets of £167,238,083 represents 50 per cent. of our public liabilities.

The next item is our investments in subsidiary companies, and the total of these has been written down very considerably below their asset value.

The demand for accommodation has been less than in the previous year, and the figure for our advances therefore is lower by £8,390,000, but represents 50.2 per cent. of our deposits as compared with 48.2 per cent. last year. I have made the usual analysis of our advances, but it fails to show any significant changes.

Our net profit brought in, after charging rebate and income-tax, provision for bad and doubtful debts, having been made partly out of profits for the year and partly out of sums previously set aside for that purpose, amounts to £1,926,903 17s. 7d., which is about £200,000 less than last year. We have transferred £400,000 to contingencies account, and recommend the payment of a dividend on "A" shares at the rate of 13½ per cent. per annum, and a dividend on the "B" shares at the rate of 5 per cent. per annum, being the same rates as those paid last half-year. Our balance to be carried forward will be £522,055 4s. 8d., which is about £11,000 more than that brought in.

The Financial Crisis

I hope these results, obtained during a period of unexampled difficulty, will not be considered unsatisfactory. The year 1931 was packed with a number of wholly extraordinary circumstances. Beginning with a low Bank rate of 3 per cent., subsequently reduced to 2½ per cent., with gilt-edged securities standing at high prices, it ended with a Bank rate of 6 per cent. and a serious depreciation in the value of Government stocks. Warnings as to the danger of our national finances given during the introduction of the first Budget in the spring were amplified in an alarming way by the report of the May Committee, and were acted upon in the second Budget passed in October, with onerous additional burdens of taxation, after a General Election of unprecedented significance.

The breakdown of credit in Germany and Central Europe and the drain of gold from this country finally brought about our departure from the gold standard. All these facts, coupled with the numerous failures of banks in nearly all countries throughout the world, except our own, and political unrest in many places, built up a situation hitherto unknown. British banks have received a large measure of congratulation from a generous Press and public for the way in which they have conducted their business and maintained their reputation for strength and soundness through all the financial convulsions of last year. Criticisms on some points were occasionally made, but no cry was ever less effective or received less credence than that raised against the banks during the General Election last October. (Hear, hear.)

Patriotic Conduct of the Country

I would like to pay a humble tribute to the patriotic sanity and common-sense restraint of the people of this country. Instead of running to the banks to withdraw deposits in a panic, and thus creating the very troubles they wished to avoid, they hurried to the Inland Revenue offices to pay the increased taxes which they had voluntarily imposed on themselves by their votes at the last General Election.

Three times already in this century the country has been confronted by a crisis of first-class magnitude. In each case it has without hesitation unflinchingly faced the situation.

The tragedy is that, with a great variety of conflicting counsels, the ordinary citizen may well be excused if he fails to have a clear vision of the many issues with which he is confronted.

We in Lloyds Bank are attempting to provide our contribution to the general knowledge. In the hope of throwing more light on the situation we have arranged for the production next month of a series of articles in our Bank Review, including one setting forth the French point of view, another by an eminent German economist, and a final summing-up by Sir Arthur Salter, whose work on the Economic Council of the League of Nations is so well known.

For the moment I am going to content myself by referring to what seems to me to be the main cause of our troubles. Primarily, of course, the War is responsible, either directly by the huge destruction of wealth which it caused and the vast borrowings which were entailed for its pursuit, or indirectly by the dislocation of trade which followed in its train. The great increase of productive power and new inventions arising out of the War caused an over-production of primary commodities relatively to the high cost of manufactured articles, and thus a lack of purchasing power was experienced by countries engaged in the production of primary commodities, both on account of the lower prices obtained for the increasing amount of their goods, and also by reason of the relatively excessive price of manufactured articles.

A further contributory factor was the disturbance to the monetary systems of the world caused by the transfer of huge sums from debtor to creditor nations, which had no commercial origin or basis and produced a constant drift of gold to the two nations which had become the chief War creditors in the world. The consequent rise in the value of gold, and its corollary, the fall in prices of commodities, still further accentuated the unfortunate position of the nations engaged in primary production, and curtailed their power of purchasing from manufacturing nations.

Confined in this vicious circle, and cut off from the possibility of normal international trade, nations of the earth have been showing an increasing tendency to think of themselves alone, and to aim at an impossible state of self-sufficiency; to be willing indeed to sell to others, but, by tariffs, restriction of imports, and control of exchange, to render it impossible for other nations to sell to them. In such a mad world a return of prosperity, the one thing we all want, has, for the time being, been made an impossibility, and international trade has been brought largely to a standstill.

Interdependence of Nations

Within the last few weeks a chairman has not hesitated, in the rather unusual surroundings of a company's annual general meeting, to invoke the words of a prayer initiated 2,000 years ago. I should like to follow his example and ask this meeting whether, behind the spiritual meaning of the words of another statement of an equal age and sanctity, embodied in the "second great commandment," there does not lie a real worldly wisdom, a wisdom which is peculiarly applicable in these days both to individuals and nations.

So far as this country is concerned, I think we are justified in feeling that it has shown a readiness to live up to these exhortations. It has indeed forgiven great debts, though it has not received an equal forgiveness in return, and it has striven to be a good neighbour. If it has been compelled by force of circumstances to curtail its welcome to goods from other countries, I cannot help hoping that our action in this respect, which I agree was necessary, may be the means of opening the eyes of the world to the desirability of a wider and more hospitable range in regard to international trade. (Hear, hear.) Are we not all dependent one upon the other? Can we really live alone?

The Chairman then dealt with the opportunity for nations to arrive at some mutual understanding for the removal of the various restrictions to trade, and continuing said:—

In the matter of War debts and reparations we are at present at an absolute deadlock. Divested of its many complexities, we are confronted by this simple and well recognised fact—that countries can only pay their debts by the transfer of goods, services, or gold. Gold, in ordinary circumstances, is only used for the payment of the comparatively small balance resulting from the exchange of goods; but France and the United States of America have to a great extent refused to take any commodities but gold, and now that they have received the great bulk of the existing stock of this metal, it would seem logical that they should consent to receive payment in the only other form left available, if they insist on the payments being continued.

It is interesting in the light of present events to read Mr. Francis Hirst's book on the life and writings of President Jefferson, when the international position between Europe and America was the exact converse of that prevailing now. In 1792, as Secretary of State, he dispatched a State paper to the British Minister setting forth his views on the law and philosophy of war debts.

These approximate very closely to the views held by debtor nations to-day, and, translated into the language of modern conditions, set forth that it is illogical for a State to exclude by high tariffs or prohibitions the products of another State from which it is demanding a payment of debts.

Although these views are being accepted with a growing degree of unanimity by men of enlightenment in all countries, there seems to be an unfortunate hesitation in publicly admitting them and conveying them to the general mass of the people. Our experience has been in this country that the people are not afraid of truths, and when they are told the facts they have shown a willingness and anxiety to face them. (Hear, hear.) It is sincerely to be hoped that the world as a whole will speedily see the necessity of improving the relations between all its constituent parts; but in any case we have a fruitful field in the British Empire in which to expand them and bring them to fruition.

The report was adopted, and a vote of thanks to the staff of the bank approved.

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FREDERIC KETTLE, B.A.,
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THE NEW EUROPE GROUP 55, Gower Street, London, W.C.1.
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February, 1932. W. P. WHELDON, *Secretary and Registrar.*

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THE situation at Shanghai has become more alarming during the past week. Western Governments could shut their eyes to holocausts of yellow men; but the killing and wounding of their own nationals in the International Settlement is another matter. This adventure must obviously be stopped. That it will not be stopped by polite representations to Tokio was evident long ago. Nor will it be stopped by fawning on Japan and pretending that the unfortunate Chinese are the real villains of the piece. The League of Nations must do what it was created to do. Great Britain and the other League Powers acting in concert with the United States can call off the dogs of war, if they choose. The risks involved in taking a firm stand are, as we argue in another column, negligible compared to the risks of letting things drift. We hope that the Assembly of the League, which is to be called at the instance of China, will rally the waverers who mistake funk for prudence.

* * *

Most of the delegations at Geneva have now expressed their views on disarmament. The French plan receives whole-hearted support from Belgium and Czechoslovakia, and a more guarded approval from Denmark and Spain, both of whom really want disarmament. Norway, Holland, Turkey, Canada and the U.S.S.R. are all critical of the plan. Mr. Litvinov attacked it root and branch in a speech which made a deep impression on the Conference. He brought forward again his former demand for total and universal disarmament; but he followed this with a declaration of the Soviet Government's readiness to proceed by instalments. As a first step he urged the abolition of all the greater weapons of aggression—tanks, big guns, ships above 10,000 tons, aircraft carriers, heavy bombing planes, and chemical and bacteriological methods of warfare. He is thus in line with Italy, with a number of the smaller States, and, of course, with Germany—and in advance, we are sorry to say, of Great Britain. He ended with a reassertion—which nobody who knows the facts should need—of Russia's desire for peace. On paper, then, there is a large measure of agreement, except for France and one or two of her satellites. If the French can be persuaded to put the horse before the cart (and if Japan can be restrained from upsetting both horse and cart), the Conference may yet confound the pessimists.

* * *

It is very likely, of course, that what happened in Paris on Tuesday may affect the course of events at Geneva, as it may also affect the Reparations Conference at Lausanne, which has been agreed upon for June by France and Great Britain. M. Laval's defeat in the Senate was not unexpected. He tried to get the attack which was to be led by M. Peyronnet postponed, on the plea that the issues under discussion at Geneva were more